THE WORKS

OF

The Ettrick Shepherd

POEMS & BALLADS.

Aikwood.

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THE WORKS

OF

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

A New Edition,

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE

REV. THOMAS THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF "THE COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF ENGLAND," "HISTORY OF SCOTLAND," SUPPLEMENT TO "LIVES OF EMINENT SCOTSMEN," ETC. ETC.

POEMS AND LIFE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIVE ENGRAVINGS.

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PREFACE.

In the present volume, we have endeavoured not only to give a complete collection of the Poetical Works of the Ettrick Shepherd, but also to present them in such a classified order, that each can be easily found under its own separate head. It is hoped that this simple plan will be an additional recommendation to the volume. The Poems themselves are so various in length, subject, and character, that some such arrangement was judged advisable, instead of throwing them together indiscriminately, or in the chronological order of their composition. They are "orient pearls," which, instead of being strung at random in publication, are worthy of a careful setting; and whether this has been done successfully, the reader is left to judge.

It is deeply to be regretted that the late Professor Wilson, who had resolved to write the Life of James Hogg, was prevented by his numerous literary avocations and declining health from carrying his purpose into effect. For who could so well have accomplished such a labour of love in embalming the memory of the Ettrick Shepherd as Christopher North? To supply so irreparable a loss, the Memoir of Hogg contained in the present volume has been written, partly from communications with his family, partly from oral intimations of the few friends who still survive, and partly from his own reminiscences which he appended to several of his publications, and which are now given in their collected form at the end of this volume, as his Autobiography. And from this source and the Memoir, it is hoped that the reader will be able to learn how the author of the "Queen's Wake" looked, lived, and acted—what struggles he endured, and what difficulties he surmounted—and with what unsuspecting simplicity and warm-hearted honesty his checkered career was lightened and animated from its commencement to its close. And what need to speak of his genius? That is attested by the poems themselves, and the universal suffrage in their behalf.

Edinburgh, *November, 1865.*

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

BY THE EDITOR.

From the earliest times the occupation of a shepherd has been associated with poetical inspiration. The beautiful scenery amidst which his life is spent, the gentle nature of his pursuits, the happy innocent creatures to which his cares are directed, are of themselves sufficient to foster, if they cannot create, a poetical spirit, and the spontaneous language of his heart can scarcely flow otherwise than in song. Hence the abundance of those simple ditties, the compositions of untaught shepherds, with which every pastoral community abounds. Hence also the eclogues and idyls of a higher style of poetry, in which the cares, the loves, and contentions of the shepherd life have been embodied. Where, indeed, could the gentle meditative Muse find a more congenial home than a pastoral region? Even in sacred Writ also, we find that the great poets of the early world were shepherds; and the examples of Moses and David have given their sanction to that attribute of the pastoral life which has been recognized as its principal characteristic.

But to this favourite impression there is also a striking obverse. In every age and country, it is true, pastoral songs have been abundant, and the favourite competitions of shepherd society have been trials in verse-making and music. But where the while is that abundance of veritable poets which such a life should have produced? The question dispels our dream; and when we try to answer it with an array of names, our memory is at a stand: we are compelled to quit the task, and confess with reluctance that the number of shepherd bards is very scanty indeed. The best of pastoral poetry has been written, not upon the mountain side or amidst the bleating of sheep, but in ceiled chambers and in crowded cities. Theocritus was a courtier, Virgil was also a courtier, and Allan Ramsay a barber. And to what is this peculiarity owing? Some may allege that as poetry is the soul of fiction, the charms of a shepherd's life can be best described by those who never handled a sheep-hook. Others may hold, that the general diffusion of the poetical spirit among a pastoral people is unfavourable to its individual concentration. But let the solution be what it may, it is certain, that while every rank in society and department of occupation has furnished its fair proportion of distinguished bards, Arcadia has been wonderfully scanty in her muster-roll. Hence the astonishment which the advent of James Hogg created in the literary world. Had he been a peer like Byron, or a ploughman like Burns—had he even been a bricklayer like Ben Jonson, or a shoemaker like Bloomfield—the marvel would not have been so startling. But he was a shepherd and nothing more. He was a shepherd and nothing else. He was the only poetical shepherd of note which as yet Scotland or England had produced; and as such, men wondered at the coming of music from such a quarter, and that he should sing so eloquently and so well. This circumstance is especially worthy of note among the claims of the Ettrick Shepherd to our admiration. It was not by, but in spite of, his profession, that he became a great poet, and raised himself to an eminence which none of his brethren have attained.

The subject of our memoir was born, according to his own account, in 1772, and on the 25th of January, the anniversary of the birth-day of Burns, whose successor he was ambitious to be recognized. This assigned date however was probably a slip of memory, as the parish register records his baptism as having taken place on the 9th of December, 1770. This date, however, gives us little aid in fixing the time of his birth, as in these districts a long interval sometimes occurred between the birth and baptism of a child. It may be mentioned also, that on the subject of dates and numbers, James Hogg, like many men of genius, was singularly forgetful and inaccurate; and hence the attacks which were sometimes unjustly made upon his veracity, as well as the want of method which characterized his management of money details, and the losses which he often suffered in consequence. He was the second of four sons, by Robert Hogg and

Margaret Laidlaw, and was born in a lowly cottage at Ettrickhall, in the neighbourhood of the parish church and school. But who would have thought that such a patronymic would give birth to a great poet? An ancient Roman devoted to augury would have declared such an event impossible, and Hogg himself used to join in the merriment which such an incongruity produced. And yet it was a name as fitting as any for a Scottish shepherd, seeing that in our vernacular, a *hog* is a sheep that has completed its lambhood by being a year old. But this distinction was little known beyond the pastoral regions of the north, where the name was suggestive of far different sounds than those of gentle bleating; and it was in good taste, as well as conformity with this general prejudice, that the poet exchanged it for that of the Ettrick Shepherd, in those writings by which his memory was to be perpetuated. It was a poetical exchange, and he had as legitimate a right to the one name as the other. And yet the Hoggs were of no vulgar race, as they claimed their descent from one Haug of Norway, a gallant reiver and destroyer in his day. The successors of this worthy were the Hoggs of Fauldshope, a farm about five miles from Selkirk, who held their land in fee of the knights of Oakwood and Harden; and after the Borders had been reduced to tranquillity, these belligerent progenitors of our poet adopted the peaceful occupation of shepherds. Such was also the case with his maternal ancestry, the Laidlaws of Phaup and Craik. Although a crook was therefore the natural inheritance of the Ettrick Shepherd, his descent was both old and respectable in Border estimation; and when there was "need of such vanities," it could have shown an escutcheon that would have put not a few moneyed upstarts to the blush. That Hogg, in common with his countrymen, was not insensible to these heraldic advantages, such as they were, more especially after his own personal merits had made him the equal of those who had sixteen quarterings, was evinced in his "Mountain Bard," where, in the "Fray of Elibank," one of the chief heroes is his ancestor, the Laird of Fauldshope; and in the "Pilgrims of the Sun," where he commemorates Haug of Norway.

Of the parents of our poet, his mother, Margaret Laidlaw, is the most entitled to our notice. She was distinguished not only by her spirit and activity, but her strong natural talent and true Scottish humour; while she was also remarkable for her Border lore, in the shape of ballads, songs, and traditional stories, so that from these qualifications, and especially the last, her cottage was a favourite resort of the shepherds of Ettrick and Yarrow. A mother's teaching—that which nothing can equal, and for the want of which nothing can compensate—is thus apparent both in the tales and poetical writings of her distinguished son. Her songs had lulled his infancy, and her stories amused his boyhood; they had become the groundwork of his intellectual being, and the prompters of his earliest thoughts. From the wild and wonderful of these legends, heard at a period when every tale is received as a reality, what but a minstrel and story-teller could have been produced? Robert Hogg, the father of the poet, appears to have been of very ordinary understanding as compared with his partner; but this the less mattered, as it is not from the father but the mother that the son generally derives his intellectual bias and stamp. Perhaps, in eight cases out of ten, it will be found that eminent men have inherited the maternal mind, and that their career has been mainly decided by the maternal training. Until his marriage, Robert Hogg had been a shepherd; but after that event, and in consequence of having saved some money, he exchanged his calling for the more ambitious one of a farmer, and took a lease of the farms of Ettrickhouse and Ettrickhall. For a while he seems to have prospered in his new occupation, purchasing large flocks, and driving them to the Scotch and English markets, until a great fall in the price of sheep, and the absconding of his principal debtor, quickly reduced him to bankruptcy. The downfall was so complete, that all his effects were sold by auction, and his family turned out of doors, helpless and penniless, before James had completed his sixth year. Here too the latter was to resemble Burns, by a boyhood of poverty, privation, and toil. Happily, a friend in need was at hand to provide them with occupation and a home: this was Mr. Brydon, farmer of Crosslea, who took a short lease of the farm of Ettrickhouse, placed Robert Hogg there as his shepherd, and continued to supply the family with the means of support until his own premature death, which occurred suddenly by the fall of a tree. The poet, who never forgot his kindness, commemorated his worth in the "Dialogue in a Country Churchyard," which appeared in the earliest of his publications.

As has already been mentioned, James Hogg at the time of his father's bankruptcy was in his sixth year, an age when in Scotland every boy is expected to be able to read—or at least to be familiar with the letters of the alphabet. This key of knowledge the young poet had fortunately secured when the misfortunes of the family commenced. The school-house was close by their cottage door, and James had attended it for a few months, until he was fit to be inducted into the Shorter Catechism and the Proverbs of Solomon, which in those days were the principal elementary school-books, not only in the country, but many of our towns. His father's disasters however arrested his further progress, and when only seven years of age, he was obliged to go to service, being

hired by a neighbouring farmer to herd a few ewes, upon a half-year's wages of a ewe-lamb and a pair of shoes. It was as well for him that his place of servitude was the open air, and his charge nearly able to take care of themselves, while their keeper was following his own boyish devices. "Even at that early age," he says, "my fancy seems to have been a hard neighbour for both judgment and memory. I was wont to strip off my clothes and run races against time, or rather against myself; and in the course of these exploits, which I accomplished much to my own admiration, I first lost my plaid, then my bonnet, then my coat, and finally my hosen, for as for shoes, I had none. In that naked state did I herd for several days, till a shepherd and maid-servant were sent to the hills to look for them, and found them all." How strangely and how faithfully the doings of our matured years are foreshadowed in the escapades of our boyhood! They are but sketches amplified into paintings. After herding ewes for half a year, during which the question must have often occurred, "*Quis custodiat ipsos custodes?*" James was taken home and again sent to school, where he advanced a step higher in education, by entering a class in which the Bible was read; and at the same time, he learned the elements of writing, until he was able to copy those lines in large text, every letter of which was an inch in length. As yet, he had merely entered the threshold of regular scholarship; but farther he was not to advance. About half a year in all he had attended school, where he had picked up a little reading, and an all but illegible penmanship; but of these he had to make the most, as they constituted the sum total of his schoolhood for life. It was indeed a brief apprenticeship even for poetry itself, the most independent upon learning and adventitious aids of all human occupations. Compared with this, the training of the great Ayrshire bard was a college curriculum.

When the winter had ended, James Hogg was sent in spring to his old employment of herding ewes. This is considered the lowest of all rural occupations, although it frequently serves as an apprenticeship to the higher vocation of a shepherd. In this humble department of servitude he continued several years, while the treatment he received and the hardships he underwent would have crushed any spirit that was not gifted with more than ordinary elasticity. But during this heart-sinking monotonous period, two bright episodes threw a gleam of sunshine across the waste, and in some measure relieved it of its dreariness. The first of these was his falling in love; and the short narrative of this pure ardent affection of a child's heart is too beautiful to be related in any other language than his own. "That summer, when only eight years of age, I was sent out to a height called Broad-heads with a rosy-cheeked maiden to herd a flock of new-weaned lambs, and I had my mischievous cows to herd besides. But as she had no dog, and I had an excellent one, I was ordered to keep close by her. Never was a master's order better obeyed. Day after day I herded the cows and the lambs both, and Betty had nothing to do but to sit and sew. Then we dined together every day at a well near to the Shiel-sike-head, and after dinner I laid my head down on her lap, covered her bare feet with my plaid, and pretended to fall sound asleep. One day I heard her say to herself, "Poor little laddie, he's juist tired to death," and then I wept till I was afraid she would feel the warm tears trickling on her knee. I wished my master, who was a handsome young man, would fall in love with her, and marry her, wondering how he could be so blind and stupid as not to do it. But I thought if I were he, I would know well what to do."

As music may be called the twin of love, the transition of the young poet-born herd from the one to the other was both simple and natural. But to become not only an admirer of sweet strains but their creator, is a very different process from what is called "falling in love," although the one is wonderfully aided by the other; so that while the heart of the lover, like the Eolian harp, only waits for the passing breeze, he must undergo a long mechanical process before he can embody his feelings upon an instrument. It was easy therefore for Hogg to fall in love when eight years old, but very difficult to become a good violinist at twice the age, although a kindred impulse carried him on. Into the attempt however he dashed with his characteristic enthusiasm, and was rewarded by becoming an excellent musician. Amidst a world of discouraging circumstances, and when he had reached only his fourteenth year, he had saved five shillings for the purchase of an old violin, and to this he devoted all the time he could spare in the evening after his day of toil was ended. His place for practice was the cow-house, or the stable where he had his bed; and as the building was at some distance from the house, he was satisfied that these nocturnal rehearsals, in which he went over his old favourite Scottish tunes, could disturb nobody but himself. But a strange accident at last betrayed the secret. "When serving," he says, "with Mr. Scott of Singlee, there happened to be a dance one evening, at which a number of the friends and neighbours of the family were present. I being admitted into the room as a spectator, was all attention to the music; and, on the company breaking up, I retired to my stable-loft, and fell to essaying some of the tunes to which I had been listening. The musician going out to a short distance from the house, and not being aware that another of the same

craft was so near him, was not a little surprised when the tones of my old violin assailed his ears. At first he took it for the late warbles of his own ringing through his head; but on a little attention, he, to his horror and astonishment, perceived that the sounds were real—and that the tunes, which he had lately been playing with so much skill, were now murdered by some invisible being hard by him. Such a circumstance at that dead hour of the night, and when he was unable to discern from what quarter the sound proceeded, convinced him all at once that it was a delusion of the devil; and, suspecting his intentions from so much familiarity, he fled precipitately into the hall, speechless with affright, and in the utmost perturbation, to the no small mirth of Mr. Scott, who declared that he had lately been considerably annoyed by the same discordant sounds."

With these exceptions, the boyhood of James Hogg seems to have passed with little enjoyment, save what he could derive from a healthy vigorous constitution and lively temperament. Before he had reached the age of fifteen, he had served a dozen of masters, some of whom treated him with great severity, and under one of whom he was nearly worn out with hunger and fatigue. These rapid changes of employers were chiefly owing to his increase in growth and strength, which fitted him for a greater amount of work, and entitled him to demand higher wages; but with all these shiftings, none of his masters refused to recommend him to the next, especially on the score of his inoffensive behaviour. "This character," he humorously adds, "which I, some way or other, got at my very first outset, has in some degree attended me ever since, and has certainly been of utility to me; yet though Solomon avers that a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, I declare that I have never been so much benefited by mine, but that I would have chosen the latter by many degrees." His wages, which at the best were but a pittance, he always carried home to his parents, who in turn maintained him in clothing; but it was only such as their very scanty means could supply; so that even from his own account, he might sometimes have discharged the useful offices of a scarecrow, as well as those of a cow-herd. At times he had only two shirts, and when these became so worn out that he could use them no longer, the rest of his attire impeached him of the fact by showing more than enough of his skin. During all this time, his education, or at least his scholarship, had been almost entirely at a stand: he wrote nothing, while his reading was confined to the Bible, the only book to which he had access. The part which had greatest attraction for him was the metrical version of the Psalms of David at the end of it, most of which he learned by heart, and retained his liking for them through life. From Singlee (which he had signalized by his musical attempts), Hogg entered the service of Mr. Laidlaw of Elibank, upon the Tweed, where he found his situation more comfortable than the other had been, and where he remained for three half years, a term longer than he had spent in the other quarters. This greater comfort was owing to his exemption from the dull and degraded office of a cow-herd, and his being employed in the rough general work of a farm. His situation was probably that of a *little man* or farm-servant of all work, who is expected to do everything, be at the call of everybody, and have no objections to the drudgery, however miscellaneous or tiresome. That such an office was welcomed as a relief shows what a bondage his boyhood had undergone. When he had reached his sixteenth year, Hogg passed from Elibank to the service of Mr. Laidlaw of Willenslee, the father of his previous employer, and remained with him two years in the capacity of shepherd. He had now attained the office which he regarded as not only his legitimate occupation, but his birthright, for his ancestors time out of mind had been shepherds. He was no longer to keep cows from the unfenced corn-fields, attend horses, ply the flail, and be the mere hewer of wood and drawer of water to the servants of a farm establishment. And to those who read the "Shepherd's Calendar," the best of Hogg's prose sketches, and mark the responsibility of his new office, the skill, activity, and endurance so continually tasked in a precarious climate like that of Scotland, and the numerous daily risks and hourly chances to which the flocks are exposed, the previous delay will not appear too long. To superintend a *hirsel* or flock of sheep, a *man* is needed, and the first assumption of the shepherd's plaid is the investiture of the *toga virilis*.

On commencing the pastoral life at Willenslee, Hogg had greater leisure for reading, and in his eighteenth year he first got a perusal of the "Life and Adventures of Sir William Wallace," and the "Gentle Shepherd," the first of these works being the metrical romance of Blind Harry modernized by Hamilton of Gilbertfield, while both, until a very recent period, were as invariably to be found in the cottages of the Scottish peasantry as the Bible itself. That Hogg should therefore have missed them till now, unless indeed he had been daunted by the enterprise of spelling through them, if they were within his reach, would be somewhat incomprehensible. The highly poetical and intensely national character of these productions, now read for the first time, by one old enough to comprehend them and appreciate their excellence, might have been expected to break upon the young shepherd like the spirit-stirring blast of a trumpet, or the

utterance of a new revelation; but strangely enough, their effect was as dull and prosaic as it could well be. Mark his own account of the matter, which is a curiosity in the annals of poet-life. "Though immoderately fond of them, yet (what you will think remarkable in one who hath since dabbled so much in verse), I could not help regretting deeply that they were not in prose, that everybody might have understood them; or, I thought if they had been in the same kind of metre with the Psalms, I could have borne with them. The truth is, I made exceeding slow progress in reading them. The little reading that I had learned I had nearly lost, and the Scottish dialect quite confounded me; so that, before I got to the end of a line, I had commonly lost the rhyme of the preceding one; and if I came to a triplet, a thing of which I had no conception, I commonly read to the foot of the page without perceiving that I had lost the rhyme altogether. I thought the author had been straitened for rhymes, and had just made a part of it do as well as he could without them. Thus, after I got through both works, I found myself much in the same predicament with the man of Eskdalemuir, who had borrowed Bailey's Dictionary from his neighbour. On returning it, the lender asked him what he thought of it. 'I dinna ken, man,' replied he; 'I have read it all through, but canna say that I understand it; it is the most confused book that ever I saw in my life.'" Here something more than a merely defective education was at work: the poetical spirit was still dead within him, or rather not yet awakened; and he who was to become a better poet than either Ramsay or Henry the Minstrel, wished that their narratives had been stripped of their poetical adornments, and delivered in plain prose. It was not, indeed, by poetry but by prose writings that the Ettrick Shepherd's inspiration was first kindled, as is apparent from the continuation of this strange part of his narrative: "The late Mrs. Laidlaw of Willenslee took some notice of me, and frequently gave me books to read while tending the ewes; these were chiefly theological. The only one that I remember anything of, is Bishop Burnet's 'Theory of the Conflagration of the Earth." Happy, it was for me that I did not understand it! for the little of it that I did understand had nearly overturned my brain altogether. All the day I was pondering on the grand millenium, and the reign of the saints; and all the night dreaming of new heavens and a new earth—the stars in horror, and the world in flames!" It was well that amidst this feverish transcendentalism, appliances were thrown in that brought him down to the world, and linked him to its every-day realities. Mrs. Laidlaw sometimes gave him the newspapers, "which I pored on," he says, "with great earnestness—beginning at the date, and reading straight on, through advertisements of houses and lands, balm of Gilead, and everything; and after all, was often no wiser than when I began." Besides this methodical sedative, was the great mechanical difficulty he felt in writing, so that he had no temptation to vitiate his taste or waste his growing powers in premature and useless effusions. The imperfect penmanship which he had learned had been so long disused, that at this time, when he was obliged to write a letter to his elder brother, he had actually forgotten how to make several letters of the alphabet, so that he had to patch up the words in the best way he could without their assistance.

At Willenslee, where he first enjoyed the comforts of servitude, and opportunities such as they were of intellectual improvement, Hogg remained two years, at the end of which he was engaged as a shepherd by Mr. Laidlaw, tenant of Blackhouse, a farm on the Douglas Burn in Yarrow. This was at Whitsunday, 1790, when the young poet was in his twentieth year. He had now also for the first time found a resting-place, and he continued in it ten years. The change was in every way for the better; for not only did Mr. Laidlaw treat him with a kindness which was more that of a father than a master, but having a considerable number of books, he allowed his shepherd the free use of the collection. This was a golden opportunity, of which Hogg was eager to avail himself, and he soon became not only an apt and fluent, but also a considerate reader. It is fortunate that we have distinct pictures of the young rustic while he was thus unconsciously training himself for a future distinction that was to astonish his compeers and the world at large. The account is thus given by Mr. William Laidlaw, the son of his employer, who cherished the recollections of his early friendship to the last:—"About nineteen years of age, Hogg was rather above the middle height, of faultless symmetry of form; he was of almost unequalled agility and swiftness. His face was then round and full, and of a ruddy complexion, with light blue eyes that beamed with gaiety, glee, and good-humour, the effect of the most exuberant animal spirits. His head was covered with a singular profusion of light-brown hair, which he was obliged to wear coiled up under his hat. On entering church on a Sunday, where he was all his life a regular attender, he used, on lifting his hat, to raise his right hand to assist a graceful shake of his head in laying back his long hair, which rolled down his back, and fell below his loins. And every female eye was upon him, as, with light step, he ascended the stair to the gallery where he sat."

The year 1796 is the date which he assigns for his first attempt in poetry, when he begun rather prematurely, as he thinks, to write verses. And in this sus-

picion he is right; for although he was already in the twenty-sixth year of his age, the defects of his early education, his limited reading, and the narrow locality within which he had lived, were disqualifications for which mere genius cannot compensate. It must be remembered also, that his imagination, instead of being the earliest, was one of the latest of his intellectual faculties, and more than usually slow in maturing. The first essay of the future author of the "Queen's Wake" was a poetical epistle to a student of divinity, one of his acquaintances; and it was mostly composed, he tells us, of borrowed lines and sentences from Dryden's *Virgil*, and Harvey's metrical *Life of Bruce*. This we can easily understand. Poets are born, but rhymers must be manufactured. The afflatus itself is divine, but the expression of it is a mechanical process, which can only be acquired by a drudgery that extinguishes all weaker inspirations at the outset. Hence it is that many a heaven-born bard is doomed to "die and give no sign," because he cannot embody his tumultuous thoughts in longs and shorts, and make them chime at fitting intervals. As we have seen, also, Hogg had no original love for rhyme, or perception of its principles; and finding himself unable to trip along at ease in his first attempt, he was obliged, like other early poets so circumstanced, to use the aid of a go-cart. We know what mastery he afterwards attained in language, and what wondrous excellence he manifested in every department of versifying; but this was only progressive, and the fruits of a toil and application commensurate with the spirit that inspired it.

The difficulties which Hogg experienced in his first poetical attempt only urged him on to fresh efforts; and by these he was enabled to discover that his Muse could walk upon her own feet, instead of being obliged to have recourse to a hired conveyance. The first piece he composed that he could call wholly his own, was "An address to the Duke of Buccleugh, in beha'f o' mysel' and ither poor Fock." Encouraged by his success in this trial, he repeated the experiment once and again, and within the same year produced a song called "The way that the world goes on," and an eclogue entitled "Wattie and Geordie's Foreign Intelligence." The fountain sealed was thus opened, the stream gushed out more and more abundantly, and everything—song, ballad, drama, pastoral—was daringly attempted by the disimprisoned spirit in turn. After these first throes of new life, the poet was groping in all directions to ascertain where his strength lay, while every attempt was accompanied with the delight of a fresh discovery. His great ambition was to be a poet, and he had found that to write poetry was not in his case an impossible or even very difficult task. Of all men, too, it is well known, that poets are the least disposed to put their candle under a bushel: in fact the same resistless enthusiasm that impels them to write, makes them eager to read their productions to all who have ears to hear. The neighbouring swains accordingly were soon made cognizant of the important fact that their companion could write songs, and he became widely known among the lads and lasses of the district under the name of "Jamie the Poeter." It was no nickname, but a title of the highest honour; as such he valued and received it; and no music could be sweeter to his ears than his own songs, when they were sung at merry-meetings by the rosy damsels of the country side. Many would have been content with such distinction, and have sought nothing higher; but happily the case was different with the young Ettrick Shepherd. Only a year after his first poetical attempts, he heard for the first time of Burns, from a person who recited to him the poem of "Tam o' Shanter," and fired him with the renown which the Ayrshire peasant had won. This was in 1797, the year of Burns' death. A high standard was now set up for the hitherto unregulated ambition of the bard of Ettrick, and he resolved to give himself no rest until he had reached it. "Every day," he says, "I pondered on the genius and fate of Burns. I wept, and always thought with myself—What is to hinder me from succeeding Burns? I too was born on the 25th of January, and I have much more time to read and compose than any ploughman could have, and can sing more old songs than ever ploughman could in the world.' But then, I wept again because I could not write. However, I resolved to be a poet, and to follow in the steps of Burns." This was the steadfast purpose of his heart, and amidst years of obscurity, and trial, and change, it was never lost sight of. Of this devotedness the continuation of his narrative gives the following instance: "I remember in the year 1812, the year before the publication of the "Queen's Wake," that I told my friend the Rev. James Nicol, that I had an inward consciousness that I should yet live to be compared with Burns; and though I might never equal him in some things, I thought I might excel him in others. He reprobated the idea, and thought the assumption so audacious, that he told it as a bitter jest against me in a party that same evening. But the rest seeing me mortified, there was not one joined in the laugh against me, and Mr. John Grieve replied in these words, which I will never forget, 'After what he has done, there is no man can say *what* he may do.'"

This allusion of the Shepherd to the superior advantages he enjoyed over Burns in his attempts to rival him, calls our attention to his past training and his present intellectual opportunities. As we have already seen, the education of his boyhood had

been chiefly oral; it was from a mother's voice, rather than from books and schoolmasters, that he had derived what he knew, and laid the foundation of his subsequent progress and acquirements. She had stored his early memory with the rude, but vitally poetic and inspiring ballads of the Border, which were still fresh in his heart, and with the indelible character of those first impressions out of which the future man is moulded; so that, when his attempts in poetry commenced, they not only communicated the impulse, but served as guides and exemplars. No rival instruction had intervened to divert their bias or abate their force. And now that he had reached the age of manhood, he enjoyed such facilities as, to a poet at least, could make large amends for the striking deficiencies of his education. From 1790, when he commenced the shepherd life at Blackhouse, he had the free use of an excellent domestic library, containing the poetical works of Milton, Pope, Thomson, and Young, the *Spectator*, several volumes of history and travel, and a considerable store of theological works, the *sine qua non* in those days of every Scottish reader and book-collector. In all this there was material enough to make a learned peasant at the close of the eighteenth century. Nor were opportunities for attentive reading so greatly wanting. Independently of daily snatches of time which the shepherd life affords, there were two months of every year—from the middle of July to the middle of September—when his chief duty consisted of "summering the lambs," during which the young of the flock were committed to his care, and had only to be moved from place to place, as the chief part of the work was performed by his dog. Thus circumstanced, he carried his books and writing utensils to the hill-side, and had ample opportunity for meditation and self-improvement. Already also he had contemplated scenery of more poetical interest than that of the Border, having gone in 1793 with a flock of his master's sheep to Strathfillan, in Perthshire, and viewed the wild grandeur of the mountains and glens of the west Highlands. With such opportunities, an active acquisitive mind, hungering for knowledge, and emulous for intellectual distinction, can do wonders, and Hogg was not a man to neglect the instruction which was thus presented to his hand. But better than all are the living books of intellectual companionship, and in these the Ettrick Shepherd was especially fortunate. Of his valued associates, the principal place is due to William Laidlaw, the son of his employer, at that time a very young man, and afterwards known as the friend of Sir Walter Scott, and steward of his estate. Such was Laidlaw's poetical talent, that he only needed to have cultivated it to secure for himself a high place among the song-makers of his country, of which a proof remains in his beautiful and popular lay, called "Lucy's Flitting." As a judicious critic, censor, and counsellor, the Ettrick Shepherd, both then and long afterwards, found him an invaluable assistant. A second on the list was William Hogg, the Shepherd's elder brother. A third was Alexander Laidlaw, at that time a shepherd like the poet himself, and in later life farmer of Bowerhope, on the border of St. Mary's Lake.

The meetings of these four, all of them young men, and united by the aim of mutual improvement and the generous ambition of intellectual distinction, were frequent; while the subjects they discussed were of that useful practical character which fitted them for higher occupation, and a wider sphere of action than that in which their lot had been cast; and they all were subsequently more or less distinguished by their contributions to literary periodicals, and the winning of several prizes awarded by the *Journal of the Highland Society of Scotland*. The proceedings of this interesting literary coterie, where four young peasants, shut out from the busy world, but conscious of their latent powers, were preparing themselves to play a part in it, would have formed in important history which the philosopher would love to contemplate; but unfortunately, the only account we have of them, is of one meeting, which Hogg has himself recorded in the "Shepherd's Calendar." The time was the 24th of January, 1794, that period distinguished by a terrible snow-storm which he has so graphically described; the place at which the youthful aspirants assembled, was a lonely cottage at Entertrony, beside the source of the Ettrick, and almost twenty miles distant from Blackhouse, where Hogg resided. His description of the gathering and bursting of the storm, his battle with the elements, and his reluctant abandonment of his journey midway, and return to his endangered flocks with the unread essay in his pocket, form a picture such as the "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties" has seldom realized. But besides these formal meetings, others often occurred casually and in the open air, at which they discussed their favourite themes, among which, as might be expected, poetry held an important place. One of these, which occurred in the spring of 1796, was the occasion of a friendly intellectual competition. Hogg, as we have already seen, had been occupied during the two previous years in a series of poetical attempts, by which he had been gradually ascertaining his own strength, and acquiring facility in the mechanical process of verse-making. On the present occasion his brother William, Alexander Laidlaw, and himself, were resting on the side of a hill above Ettrick church, when the Shepherd in the course of conversation happened to drop some hints of his superior talents in poetry.

This fired the emulation of the others; William Hogg declared that though he could not in any case put words into rhyme, yet if allowed to enter into trial with blank verse, he would take him up for any bet he pleased, and Laidlaw also offered himself as a candidate. It was the third Eclogue of Virgil starting into life among the braes of Ettrick—it was Menalcas, Damœtas, and Palæmon preparing to pipe over again, with the stake of a kid against a bicker of beech-wood! The judges of this shepherd tournament were soon agreed upon, but not so the subject of competition; and ten different themes having been proposed, the choice among them had to be decided by casting lots, which fell upon THE STARS—"things," says Hogg, "which we knew little more about, than that they were burning and twinkling over us, and to be seen every night when the clouds were away." James, the original challenger, commenced with great fervour, and in a week produced a poem entitled "Reflections on a view of the Nocturnal Heavens." Laidlaw also in the same space of time produced his contribution, called "Astronomical Thoughts." Nothing was wanting but the article of William Hogg; but as he had probably found, like many in their first attempt, that blank verse is the most difficult of all versification, from lack of the boundaries of rhyme to keep it from running into prose, his production of "Urania's Tour" was not presented until half a year after, and even then unfinished, and when the judges were dispersed. It was thought, however, by those who read it, to be the best of the three in point of sublimity, although the measure was bad, while the sentiments were often bombastical.

In this detail of mental training, by which an illiterate shepherd, who could scarcely read or write, became so eminent a poet and so excellent a writer of prose, his own account of the manner in which he studied, and set down his ideas, is worthy of notice. His early productions were generally written in the open air, and with his flock and dog beside him. He folded and stitched a few sheets of paper, which he carried out to the hill-side in his pocket; his ink-horn was a small vial fixed in a hole in his waistcoat, with a cork attached to it by a small piece of twine. Thus equipped for action, he mused and meditated upon his subject, jotting down the produce during short intervals when his unruly flock permitted the indulgence. It was the mere mechanical transcription of the thoughts that had been elaborated and written in his brain while his eye was upon his sheep. The effect of this process was, that in after life he could not write prose without pen in hand to arrest the ideas as they were formed; and having embodied them bit by bit upon paper, there they permanently remained, without entailing the trouble of a second and improved copy. In poetry, however, the mode was somewhat different, as here he was in his native element. Be the piece of what length it might, he not only composed but corrected it wholly in his mind before he committed it to paper or the slate; and thus when he commenced the task of writing it, the whole was done rapidly from beginning to end, without stop or impediment. In this way the first copy of the poem was, to speak more correctly, the second and last revise, the other having been previously written out at full on the tablets of his memory. The early habit thus formed through necessity, was afterwards continued by choice, even when literary leisure, and the appliances of a comfortable study, would have rendered such a mode of composition unnecessary.

In this manner the intellectual life of the Ettrick Shepherd had passed until he reached the age of twenty-eight. His imagination, little aided, and with scarcely any leading, had been roaming over that ample field which he was afterwards to make his own; while the disadvantages under which he had laboured were sufficient to account for his slow progress, and the lateness of his maturing as compared with other bards. But now the worst of the trial was over; the clouds were dispersing, and the sunshine had commenced. He had won a notoriety that might have satisfied a meaner ambition. For he was buoyant of spirit and winning in manner; handsome, vigorous, and of goodly appearance, as a young poet shepherd ought to be: he was distinguished by his proficiency in all active and athletic games and exercises; and even those ardent, eccentric, harum-scarum qualities which made the old women of the Forest shake their heads, and afterwards the *élite* of artificial society to stare and wonder, only the more endeared him to that happy unsophisticated society of which he formed so essential a part. He could play with heart and soul upon the violin, so that wherever he came there was no lack of music and dancing; while his presence was enough to open those floodgates of ballad and song, which irrigate the most sterile soil of peasant existence, and clothe it with fertility and beauty. Was it not much that he was already becoming king of the Forest, and that, too, by the spontaneous suffrages of his compeers? But happily for society at large, these distinctions were still not enough for him who was afterwards to write the "Queen's Wake," and in 1800 he committed himself irretrievably by rushing into print. The paramount theme of the poetical inspiration of the day was Bonaparte's threat of invading Britain, and numerous were the songs of hostile welcome and defiance with which the menace was met by all ranks and parties. Hogg on this occasion could not be silent, and he composed his Tyrtæan war-song of "Donald M'Donald," which was printed and sung with hearty applause

at clubs, convivial parties, and political associations, while all were charmed with its bold heroic sentiments, without knowing or inquiring who was its author. A curious instance of the mystification created by this ignorance is told us by the poet himself. At this time there was in Scotland a certain General M'Donald, who commanded the northern division of the British army. The song was sung at his mess every week-day, and sometimes oftener than once. Its effect upon the old man was electric: he was wont to snap his thumbs like castanets through every verse, and join in the chorus; and to the end of his days he persisted in the happy delusion that the hero of the song was no other than himself.

Thus matters had ripened for the inevitable necessity of the Shepherd becoming an author, and all that remained was the mode of commencement. This was soon decided, and by one of those uncalculated movements which distinguished the whole course of his life. He had gone with a flock of sheep to Edinburgh, to sell them at a Monday's fair; but being unable to dispose of the whole stock, he put the remainder in a park till the following Wednesday, which was the next day of sale. To relieve the dulness of the interval, he resolved to write out two or three of his poems from memory, for the purpose of having them printed—and with the characteristic haste of such a resolution the MS. was committed to a printer's hands. There was no leisure for discrimination, correction, or improvement, and he tells us that he was obliged to select, not the best of his poems, but those he could best remember, which were to issue forth without patron or publisher, and be printed at his own expense. After this rash head-foremost plunge he sold his sheep on Wednesday, returned to the Forest, and thought no more about the matter. But the press had not been equally oblivious, and in spite of his forgetfulness its task was accomplished. "I saw no more of my poems," he says, "until I received word that there were 1000 copies thrown off. I knew no more about publishing than the man of the moon; and the only motive that influenced me was, the gratification of my vanity by seeing my works in print. But no sooner did the first copy come to hand, than my eyes were opened to the folly of my conduct; for on comparing it with the MS. which I had at home, I found many of the stanzas omitted, others misplaced, and typographical errors abounding in every page." This first publication of the Ettrick Shepherd, which was born under such evil auspices, has an appearance that corresponds with its origin. It is a little pamphlet of sixty-two pages of whitey-brown paper in slim boards, entitled "Scottish Pastorals, Poems, Songs, &c.," bearing for date 1801, and printed by John Taylor in the Grassmarket. Altogether, it has the well-known desperate appearance of a poet's first work—of one who feels that he must print or die, but whose funds are far short of the measure of his ambition. And then, the poems themselves—he frankly adds, "Indeed, all of them were sad stuff, although I judged them to be exceedingly good." The world agreed with him, and the work died unnoticed. But several disagreeable circumstances besides the general neglect attended this unlucky publication. The swains of the Forest complained that in the title-page he had styled himself a tenant in Ettrick, while the farm in which he lived was held, not by himself, but his brother. He answered that he had assumed for himself no such designation, and that it did not appear in the title-page of the proof-sheet that had been sent to him. Another alleged offence was that in one of the poems he had made severe reflections on Lord Napier, who was an extensive proprietor in Ettrick; but when blamed for this by his friends and advisers, he threw back the reproach upon their own heads. "I see my error," he wrote to Laidlaw, the chief pruning-hook of his redundancies; "but what ailed both you and Clarkson, who had both perused the MS., that you had not told me that sooner? It is madness to talk of losing the whole impression; to do that, you know, is entirely out of my power; I wish I had the one paid that is printed, and other things which are more pressing at present. It is a great mortification to my gay heart, who fondly imagined the whole world were my friends—I'll proceed no further with this reflection." Having thus absolved himself to his own satisfaction, he proceeds to the humorous supposition of Lord Napier sending him a challenge. In this case, as the challenged person had the choice of distance and weapons, he would select for the former a hill-side on Ettrick, and for the latter the fragments of the rock that lay around him, by the hurling of which at his antagonist he had no doubt he would soon make his lordship a *fugie*.

While the Shepherd was in this gay humour, and committing himself to the hazards of authorship, his worldly condition was far from being comfortable or his prospects inviting. At the Whitsunday of 1800 he left Blackhouse, where he had spent so many happy years, to take up his abode at Ettrick-house, the dwelling of his parents. His father being lessee of this farm, and now too old to manage it, William, who was married, and found the house too small for his parents and his own family together, generously resigned the charge to James, rather than incommode the old people in their declining days. Thus our poet was now his own master, and nominally at least a farmer; but something better than an expiring lease was necessary to provide for the comfort of his father and mother, and secure his own establishment in the world. He re-

solved to look about for a situation as a farm overseer or manager, and for this purpose he, in June of the same year, made a tour as far as the sources of the Dee; but his quest was unsuccessful. On Whitsunday, 1803, the lease of Ettrickhouse expired, but instead of being renewed to its present occupants, a new one was granted in favour of a wealthier neighbour who was able to outbid them, and those who had so many years enjoyed its shelter were driven to the door. Such is one of the most revolting features in the history of our modern Scottish agriculture. While in the Highlands a whole clan is expatriated, that their places may be pastures for sheep or preserves for game; in the Lowlands, families that have been planted for centuries in farms to which they have acquired a sort of hereditary right, are dislodged, beggared, and sent roaming in quest of new homes, because their landlords can find alien tenants who offer a few pounds more of rental.

Before this unfortunate event occurred, a new and important era in the life of the Ettrick Shepherd had commenced by his forming an acquaintanceship with Sir Walter Scott. The Great Unknown of future years was at this time chiefly known in the Forest as sheriff of Selkirkshire, a title that invested him with almost regal importance among the primitive inhabitants of the district; while by the world in general he was recognized as an advocate who had devoted himself to literature, and given great promise of poetical excellence, in several original ballads and translations from the German poets. In 1802 he had published the first and second volumes of the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," a perusal of which Hogg was so fortunate as to obtain. He was here in an element with which he was perhaps better acquainted than even Scott himself; and it was therefore natural that he should peruse the collection as a critic and competent judge. Several imitations of the ancient ballads did not altogether please him: he thought he could produce better, and in this supposition he was right. He set to work *con amore*, and produced several ballads so like those of the old minstrels, that the only difference between them and the originals consisted in their manifest superiority. He also copied out from his mother's recital a number of old ballads, which he sent to the Sheriff, who was preparing for publication a third volume of the "Minstrelsy." As Scott was making a "raid" into the wilds of Yarrow in the autumn of that year, for the purpose of collecting more correct versions of the old songs, a meeting with his pastoral correspondent was inevitable; and accordingly himself, the Shepherd, and the Shepherd's mother, with William Laidlaw as their mutual introducer, were all assembled under the humble roof of Ettrickhouse. Mrs. Hogg chanted the ballad of "Old Maitlan'," and he was not only delighted with it, but with the *naive* humour and genuine Scottish character of the reciter. Several meetings followed during that short excursion, in which the tourists alternated the occupation of visiting memorable localities and ruined fortalices, with salmon-fishing in the Tweed; and Hogg could not sufficiently admire Scott's great conversational powers and wonderful memory, his wit, glee, and love of fun, his boldness as a rider and hardihood as a midnight fisher, plunging waist-deep into the river armed with torch and leister. The admiration also was mutual, heightened as it was by the account which Scott received of the Shepherd's previous career from William Laidlaw. To this the biographer of Sir Walter alludes in his account of their first interview. "The personal history of James Hogg must have interested Scott even more than any acquisition of that sort which he owed to this acquaintance with, perhaps, the most remarkable man that ever wore the *maud* of a shepherd. But I need not here repeat a tale which his own language will convey to the latest posterity. Under the garb, aspect, and bearing of a rude peasant—and rude enough he was in most of these things, even after no inconsiderable experience of society—Scott found a brother poet, a true son of nature and genius, hardly conscious of his powers. He had taught himself to write by copying the letters of a printed book as he lay watching his flock on the hill-side, and had probably reached the utmost pitch of his ambition when he found that his artless rhymes could touch the heart of the ewe-milker who partook the shelter of his mantle during the passing storm. As yet his naturally kind and simple character had not been exposed to any of the dangerous flatteries of the world; his heart was pure—his enthusiasm buoyant as that of a happy child; and well as Scott knew that reflection, sagacity, wit, and wisdom, were scattered abundantly among the humblest rangers of these pastoral solitudes, there was here a depth and a brightness that filled him with wonder, combined with a quaintness of humour, and a thousand little touches of absurdity, which afforded him more entertainment, as I have often heard him say, than the best comedy that ever set the pit in a roar."

Among the amusing incidents of these happy interviews, Hogg mentions two, out of which Scott, who never forgot anything, and could turn everything to good account, may be supposed to have evolved two of his tales, when his character as poet had merged into that of the Great Unknown. The party had dined at Ramsaycleugh, the farm-steading of Ettrickhouse, occupied by the Messrs. Brydon. "During the sociality of the evening, the discourse ran very much on the different breeds of sheep, that curse of the community of Ettrick Forest. The

original black-faced Forest breed being always called *the short sheep*, and the Cheviot breed *the long sheep*, the disputes at that period ran very high about the practicable profits of each. Mr. Scott, who had come into that remote district to preserve what fragments remained of its legendary lore, was rather bored with the everlasting question of the long and the short sheep. So, at length, putting on his most serious calculating face, he turned to Mr. Walter Brydon and said, 'I am rather at a loss regarding the merits of this *very* important question. How long must a sheep actually measure to come under the denomination of *a long sheep?*' Mr. Brydon, who, in the simplicity of his heart, neither perceived the quiz nor the reproof, fell to answer with great sincerity,—'It's the woo, sir,—it's the woo that makes the difference. The lang sheep hae the short woo, and the short sheep hae the lang thing; and these are just kind o' names we gie them like.' Mr. Scott could not preserve his grave face of strict calculation; it went gradually awry, and a hearty guffaw followed." When Hogg saw this dialogue repeated almost verbatim fifteen years afterwards in the introductory chapter to the tale of the "Black Dwarf," he was certain that in spite of his profound disguise he had discovered the real author of the Waverley novels, and was only shaken in his belief by the denials and mystifications of John Ballantyne. The other event which the Shepherd records belongs to their antiquarian explorations, in which Scott found, in a stumble of his own, the germ of Jonathan Oldbuck and the Kaim of Kinprunes. The whole party were pottering among the stones of an extinct church-yard in the wilds of Rankleburn. "There was a remaining tradition in the country (Hogg continues), that there was a font-stone of blue marble, out of which the ancient heirs of Buccleuch were baptized, covered up among the ruins of the old church. Mr. Scott was curious to see if we could discover it; but on going among the ruins, we found the rubbish at the spot where the altar was known to have been, dug out to the foundation—we knew not by whom, but no font had been found. As there appeared to have been a kind of recess in the eastern gable, we fell a turning over some loose stones, to see if the font was not concealed there, when we came to one half of a small pot, incrusted thick with rust. Mr. Scott's eye brightened, and he swore it was an ancient consecrated helmet. Laidlaw, however, scratching it minutely out, found it covered with a layer of pitch inside, and then said, 'Ay, the truth is, sir, it is neither mair nor less than a piece of a tar-pat that some o' the farmers hae been buisting their sheep out o', i' the auld kirk langsyne.' Sir Walter's shaggy eyebrows dipped deep over his eyes, and suppressing a smile, he turned and strode away as fast as he could, saying that 'we had just ridden all the way to see that there was nothing to be seen.'"[1]

The Shepherd had thus found a friend who had discernment to appreciate his wonderful genius and kindliness to aid its development. "Mr. Scott's meeting with Hogg," says Laidlaw, "was like that of an elder brother meeting with a younger that he had not seen for years, and whose talents and acquirements were far beyond his hopes and expectations." It was the commencement of a friendship that lasted for life, and had a most important influence on Hogg's subsequent career. But in the midst of his intellectual and poetical pursuits, which had now secured for him the esteem of so competent a judge, the Shepherd had never abated in his endeavours to better his condition. For this purpose he made two journeys into the Highlands, either to establish himself there as a farmer, or obtain a situation as overseer or manager. But beyond the magnificent scenery which they unfolded to his view, and the society with which they brought him in contact, advantages by which his experience both of the real and poetical world was amplified and improved, these journeys brought him nothing. A third tour which he extended to the island of Harris, one of the Hebrides, was attended with better promise, as a place highly favourable for sheep-farming, and here he resolved to establish himself for life. No sooner had he decided upon this adventure, than he threw himself into it with characteristic ardour. He prevailed upon a neighbouring small farmer of some capital to join him in the enterprise. A farm was taken in the island, and lambs were purchased to stock it. In the summer all things were in readiness for his departure, and as a last memorial to the home of his former years, which he had no expectation to revisit, he composed and published his "Farewell to Ettrick." It was in a spirit similar to the pathetic "Farewell" of Burns, when he was about to depart to the West Indies. We know that the voyage of Burns was suddenly prevented at the critical moment, and so also was that of the Shepherd—but in the latter instance it was not by such a happy reverse of fortune as had sent his predecessor back to his home with flying colours. On the contrary, he was advertised about the middle of July, 1804, that he could not enter into possession of the farm, because the tacksman's right to it was called in question, and a plea upon the subject brought before the Court of Session. It was a heavy loss as well as a bitter disappointment, for Hogg, who had saved £200 by his ten years' service at Blackhouse, lost the whole. His friend too, the Ettrick farmer, who had joined him in the speculation, and was

[1] Twenty years afterwards the Ettrick Shepherd embodied the greater part of these amusing incidents in the poem entitled "Lines to Sir Walter Scott, Bart."

already on his way to the island of promise with his share of the stock, was a loser to a large amount. A record of the business ventures of poets would form a sadly amusing history: it might also be an instructive one to all the tuneful brethren in all time coming, were they but susceptible of warning and example. But money calculations and business contingencies are not poetical elements. Is not the world however a gainer by this incurable improvidence? Were poets either born rich or to become rich, the fountains of their inspiration would be muddied or dried up, and even prose itself would degenerate into utter prosiness. Even the frustration of their most cherished aims often redounds to the general advantage. How much would Scotland have lost if Burns had spent his life among the sugar-canes of Jamaica, or Hogg been a thriving sheep-farmer in the distant Hebrides!

The Shepherd however was in no mood to sit down and philosophize upon the probable consequences of his disaster. The home which he had prepared for his aged parents and himself had vanished as lightly as a fog-frost. He was not only penniless but in debt. It was also a stumble, yea, an utter fall upon the threshold—a disastrous defeat at the first outset into public action, which is so apt to affect both the conduct and career of a whole after-life. But these cold damping thoughts were no sooner felt than they were thrown aside like a drenched plaid. Poets have a world of their own in which they have full range, and a capital upon which they can draw at will, however adverse the present realities may be; and in these they have their best resource as well as recompense for the numerous mischances of their lot. Hogg also possessed these peculiar advantages in a far greater degree than most of his brethren. He was a buoyant life-boat that could ship any sea, and dance upon those waves under which strong hulks had gone down. At first, indeed, he could not but grieve at the disappointment by which all his hopes were frustrated; but the shock once passed, he showed himself as elastic as ever. It is possible, indeed, that he could not inspire his friends, and still less his creditors, with the same happy contentedness and bright hopes for to-morrow; and perhaps it was on this account that he felt himself obliged to leave Ettrick, "to avoid a great many disagreeable questions and explanations." He went to the north of England, and sojourned during the rest of the summer among the lakes of Cumberland, but how he was occupied during this brief interval he does not inform us. No one indeed was more reluctant to speak of disagreeable past events than himself, and when the Harris adventure and its consequences became the subject of discourse, Hogg was wont to extinguish the subject with "Let bygones be bygones." On his return to Scotland, instead of settling in the Forest, where the "questions and explanations" were still waiting for solution, he hired himself as a shepherd to Mr. Harkness, a sheep-farmer of Mitchelslacks in Nithsdale.

The poet was thus in as poor a plight as ever, so far as worldly circumstances went; but to this was added the feeling of his late losses, and the frustration of his hopes. It was no trivial change also, that instead of being a shepherd in his own native Ettrick, from which he was proud to derive his title, he was prosecuting his vocation as an exile among the alien hills of Nithsdale; and from one or two incidental hints in his Autobiography, we can form a picture of his condition at this time which has few bright colours to recommend it. He is seated upon the side of the great hill of Queensberry, where his master's ewes are feeding; and all round him there is neither pathway nor human habitation. The place is so desolate, that the approach of a human being would be almost as startling as that of an apparition; and he has no companion but his old dog Hector, whose worth and lovable qualities he has so well and affectionately recorded in the "Shepherd's Calendar." His own costume also is in keeping with such a solitude, where the conventional rules about dress might be so safely disregarded; for his coat is ragged, and his feet are without stockings and shoes. Here he might have been an Alexander Selkirk, but that instead of being "monarch of all he surveyed," he had not a foot of land or an animal that he could call his own, but was the servant and bondman of both; and the straying muttons which he chases and runs down, as Selkirk did his goats, he may not convert off-hand into food and clothing. Not far off upon the hill, he has a bothy or wigwam, the door of which he has to enter on all fours; and when within, he must squat down upon a bed of rushes, as the lowness of the roof does not permit him to stand upright. And this is his place for meals, for shelter, and for rest during the day. Happily for him, the day however dreary or tedious will have an end, and night will restore him to the sight of the human face divine, the music of human speech, and the stir of his congenial amusements.

There was little indeed in such a kind of life either to be admired or coveted; and to one who was conscious that he was fit for better things, it was a penance to be endured, rather than a state to be enjoyed. But even thus situated upon the hill-side of Queensberry, there were strangers who could make a pilgrimage in quest of him, that they might look upon the man who had written such songs, and express their admiration of his talents. One day, when Hogg was at his wonted employment, he saw two persons advancing towards him who evidently were not shepherds; and being unable to divine

what other men could visit these parts, his curiosity and suspicion were equally awakened, while Hector, under similar alarm, confronted them with hostile barking. On coming up, the eldest of the two asked him if he was James Hogg, the shepherd of Mr. Harkness; and on receiving an answer in the affirmative, he seized his hand, and said, "Well then, sir, I am glad to see you: there is not a man in Scotland whose hand I am prouder to hold." At this address, and the title "sir," Hogg looked down at his own bare feet and ragged coat. "My name," continued the other, "is James Cunningham, a name unknown to you, though yours is not entirely so to me; and this is my younger brother, Allan, the greatest admirer that you have on earth, and himself a young aspiring poet of some promise. You will be so kind as excuse this intrusion of ours on your solitude, for, in truth, I could get no peace either night or day with Allan till I consented to come and see you." Hogg stepped down to the place where Allan was standing at a modest distance, and was gratified with the appearance of the young enthusiast; for although a dark ungainly youth about eighteen years of age, he had a strong stalwart frame for his years, and strongly-marked manly features—"the very model of Burns, and exactly such a man." Even although thus young, also, he had already acquired some poetical reputation; and Hogg had not only heard of him, but thought he had seen some of his productions. The hearts of the poets were soon knit together like those of two brothers. The three adjourned to the hut on the hill, which could scarcely give them sitting room; and while Hogg shared with them the bread and cheese of his scrip, and his bottle of milk, the elder Cunningham produced a bottle of rum or brandy, with which he had providently supplied himself for this curious pilgrimage. They spent the whole afternoon in a state of happiness which princes might have envied, and young Allan, who "brightened up prodigiously after he got into the dark bothy," repeated all his own poetical compositions, and some of his brother's. "Thus began," adds Hogg, "at that bothy in the wilderness a friendship, and a mutual attachment between two aspiring Scottish peasants, over which the shadow of a cloud has never yet passed." It was indeed a day of happiness, especially to the younger poet, who had thus realized a long-cherished wish; and how affectionately his heart could return to it, amidst the throng of London and the realization of his ambitious hopes, may be learned from the following extract of a letter from Allan to Hogg in 1826: "Often do I tread back to the foot of old Queensberry, and meet you coming down amid the sunny rain, as I did some twenty years ago. The little sodded shealing where we sought shelter rises now on my sight—your two dogs (old Hector was one) lie at my feet—the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel' is in my hand, for the first time to be twice read over after sermon, as it really was—poetry, nothing but poetry is our talk, and we are supremely happy. Or I shift the scene to Thornhill, and there whilst the glass goes round, and lads sing, and lasses laugh, we turn our discourse on verse, and still our speech is song. Poetry had then a charm for us, which has since been sobered down. I can now meditate without the fever of enthusiasm upon me; yet age to youth owes all or most of its happiest aspirations, and contents itself with purifying and completing the conceptions of early years."

In contemplating such a meeting, we seem to have Arcadia restored, and its beautiful fictions realized. The warm intercourse of genuine unsophisticated hearts—the primitive simplicity that could dispense with the usual accessories of comfort—and the light of genius that could throw sunshine over that little hovel, and convert it for the time into a bower of roses and myrtles—were there to the full. And something more and better still was collected under that roof of rushes. These men, while happy in their present lot, felt that they were born for something nobler, and were in training to realize it. Their country at large was to be their sphere of occupation, instead of a village or a pastoral strath; and their names were to be inscribed in the great roll of earth's renowned ones, instead of the memories of a few affectionate rustics. They willed it, they persevered, and they succeeded. The whole subsequent career of Allan Cunningham—the "honest Allan" of Sir Walter Scott—was in keeping with this notable interview. As yet a raw young mason, he had recognized in the Ettrick Shepherd his type and exemplar for imitation; and having been a hero-worshipper from the beginning, as he was to the end of his days, the pilgrimage to Queensberry Hill was the natural result of such a tendency. Like Hogg, he first attracted notice by his rural songs, which were sung by the peasantry of the district. Like him, he afterwards secured a higher and wider notice by his imitations of the old ballads and legends of Scotland. He then threw himself boldly into the world of literature, and distinguished himself in journal-writing, poetry, dramatic attempts, tales, novels, and romances, as Hogg did; so that, however unintentional on the part of both, they were competitors in the race of life; and if the Ettrick Shepherd was first at the winning-post, the Dumfriesshire stone-mason was only a few steps behind. In the case of Allan Cunningham, however, a wary prudence predominated, and the good things of fortune were secured by him, while his more talented and successful competitor was obliged to content himself with the barren wreath. But both have secured an imperishable renown; and as long as

Scotland is proud of her highest distinctions and best characteristics, she will hold forth their examples to her aspiring children, to show what genuine worth can effect whatever be the obstacles that confront it.

During the unsettled life of Hogg for the last three years, his Muse had not been neglected, and this especially after his interview with Scott, whose approbation was a new stimulus to exertion. He now began to collect the traditions of the Forest with greater zeal than ever, and versify them into imitations of the ancient ballads, a species of literature in which he was "to the manner born," and which he threw off with facility. While still a shepherd at Mitchelslacks, the store of these rustic songs and tales had gathered into a considerable collection, and the failure of his first publication in 1801, instead of tempting him to lay poetry aside, had only braced him for a higher attempt. As both the advice and aid of Scott were necessary in entering once more into the press, the Shepherd applied to him in the course of his next visit on business to Edinburgh. The Sheriff received him with hearty welcome, and invited him to dine at his house in Castle Street, along with William Laidlaw, who was in town, and several gentlemen who had already learned to admire the wonderful genius of Hogg. One of the most terrible ordeals through which a simple unsophisticated peasant has to pass, is his first presentation to fashionable society, and if he can go through it unscorched, he may be reckoned fireproof. But Hogg was well protected not only by the consciousness of his own talent, which made him feel that he was something else than an ordinary rustic, but by the knowledge that he could not, and would not, willingly give offence to man, woman, or child. He relied also upon his own teachable disposition, and aptitude for imitating whatever is good and graceful, and he resolved to select for his model of behaviour the principal person of the company. Thus guarded against the chance of that most terrible of all breaches called "a hole in his manners," the Shepherd repaired to Castle Street, his dress the while being that of an ordinary herdsman who has driven cattle to the market, and his hands were not only embrowned, but stained with the tokens of a recent sheep-smearing. On entering the drawing-room, and being announced, he achieved his best bow; and perceiving that Mrs. Scott, at that time in delicate health, was reclining upon a sofa, he threw himself upon another that was opposite, and stretched himself out at full length, concluding that he could not err if he but copied the lady of the house—little guessing the agony he occasioned her by his rough treatment of her delicate chintz. The dinner was a happy one, and strongly he came out with jest, song, and anecdote, with which he kept the table in a continual flow of merriment. At each round of the wine also, his confidence and familiarity as well as liveliness increased, so that from "Mr. Scott" he proceeded to "Shirra," and then to "Scott," "Walter," and "Wattie," and at supper consummated his blunders by addressing Mrs. Scott as "Charlotte," after the example of his entertainer.

Such a night could not be enjoyed without a succeeding morning of reflection and retrospection; and there was unhappily a point, a terminus in this review, beyond which the Shepherd's recollections could not carry him. What might he not have said, or what might he not have done, during this interval of reproachful oblivion? The thought so haunted him that on returning to the country he could not rest until the mystery was cleared, and an apology offered. "I am afraid," he thus wrote to the Sheriff, "that I was at least half-seas over the night I was with you, for I cannot for my life recollect what passed when it was late; and there being certainly a small vacuum in my brain, which when empty, is quite empty, but is sometimes supplied with a small distillation of intellectual matter—this must have been empty that night, or it never could have been taken possession of by the fumes of the liquor so easily. If I was in the state in which I suspect that I was, I must have spoke a very great deal of nonsense, for which I beg ten thousand pardons. I have the consolation, however, of remembering that Mrs. Scott kept in company all or most of the time, which she certainly could not have done had I been very rude. I remember, too, of the filial injunction you gave me at parting, cautioning me against being ensnared by the loose women in town. I am sure I had not reason enough left at that time to express either the half of my gratitude for the kind hint, or the utter abhorrence I inherit at those seminaries of lewdness." Having thus offered his confession and apology for all that he had said, and for all that he might, could, would, or should have said—a state of dubiety too generally understood to need further comment—the Shepherd thus proceeds to the subject of business: "You once promised me your best advice in the first lawsuit in which I had the particular happiness of being engaged. I am now going to ask it seriously in an affair in which I am sure we will both take as much pleasure. It is this:—I have as many songs beside me, which are certainly the *worst* of my productions, as will make about one hundred pages close printed, and about two hundred printed as the 'Minstrelsy' is. Now, although I will not proceed without your consent and advice, yet I would have you to understand that I expect it, and have the scheme much at heart at present. The first thing that suggested it, was their extraordinary repute in Ettrick and its neighbourhood, and being everlastingly plagued with writing copies, and promising scores which I never meant

to perform. . . . . As to my manuscripts, they are endless; and as I doubt you will disapprove of publishing them wholesale, and letting the good help off the bad, I think you must trust to my discretion in the selection of a few." Then follow several queries as to the best mode of publication; such as, whether they should have his portrait by way of frontispiece; whether they should be prefaced with an account of his life and education; whether they ought to be dedicated to Scott himself or to Lady Dalkeith. All these suggestions except the first were approved of, as the "Mountain Bard" was dedicated to Walter Scott, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff-depute of Ettrick Forest, and prefaced with an account of his own past history, in the form of three letters addressed to his friend and adviser.

When the selection had been made and all was in readiness for printing, Hogg repaired to Edinburgh with his new venture of the "Mountain Bard," and the friendly solicitude of Scott to find a publisher for the work was almost equal to that of the Shepherd himself. For this purpose he introduced its author to Constable, at that time the Aristarch of our metropolitan publishers. The literary potentate received the rustic aspirant for poetical fame very kindly, but very discouragingly: he told him that his poetry would not sell. Hogg rebutted this declaration with the usual scepticism of his brethren, declaring stoutly that he thought his poetry was as good as anybody's he had seen. That might be, the bibliopole replied, but nobody's poetry would sell: it was the worst stuff that had come to market, and *that* he had found. This indeed he might well say, as the present was a dull period, the silence however of which was but an awful prelude to that great poetical outburst which was in store for the astonished ears of the nineteenth century. After his discouraging intimation, Mr. Constable told the Shepherd that if he could procure for him two hundred subscribers he would publish the work, and give as much for it as he could. This cautious business-like procrastination, instead of a price in hand and at once, was peculiarly disagreeable to Hogg; but seeing no alternative, he set himself to the ungracious task of obtaining subscribers, of whom more than five hundred came forward; and Constable having on further examination formed a higher opinion of the "Mountain Bard," it was put to press without further delay. Hogg received a half-guinea copy for each of his subscribers, with a small sum additional, and £36 for his prose work of a "Treatise on Sheep." His disposal of the copies of the "Bard," from which his chief profits were to be derived, was characteristic of his guileless simplicity and general unfitness for money-making. "I had no regular plan," he says, "of delivering those copies that were subscribed for, but sent them simply to the people, intending to take their money in return; but though some paid me double, triple, and even ten times the price, about one-third of my subscribers thought proper to take the copies for nothing, never paying me for them to this day." But by these various windfalls he was now master of £300, a larger sum than he had ever possessed in his life.

He had now an amount of capital that even in the hands of an ordinary man might have laid the foundation of a fortune, or at least of a respectable competence. But in money matters, as well as many other things, the Ettrick Shepherd, as we have already seen, was no ordinary man. He could not plod and go warily onward and upward in the path that leads to wealth, or be made aware of the specific endurance, weight, and mobility of pounds, shillings, and pence. The manner therefore in which he got rid of his money was sufficiently characteristic. "Being now master," he tells us, "of nearly three hundred pounds, I went perfectly mad. I first took one pasture farm, at exactly one half more than it was worth, having been cheated into it by a great rascal, who meant to rob me of all I had, and which, in the course of one year, he effected by dint of law. But, in the meantime, having taken another extensive farm, I found myself fairly involved in business far above my capital. It would have required at least one thousand pounds for every one hundred pounds that I possessed to have managed all I had taken in hand; so I got every day out of one strait and confusion into a worse. I blundered and struggled on for three years between these two places, giving up all thoughts of poetry or literature of any kind." Few indeed, and only of the highest rank, are those poets who can control their imagination, instead of being controlled by it—who can confine it to poetry and the closet, instead of allowing it to intermingle and predominate in the affairs of their every-day life. As he had won three hundred pounds by his songs, the money itself was soon turned into a mere song. It had brought nothing to its owner beyond the trouble of expending it, and the vexation of finding it gone. As a *per contra* to the loss, he had his fund of cheerfulness entire and unimpaired, and he tells us, "None of these matters had the least effect in depressing my spirits:—I was generally rather most cheerful when most unfortunate." Thus much for the equanimity with which he endured his overthrow, and the elasticity with which he rose from it. At a later period, and when he had ascertained his proper vocation and what he was worth, he was able to turn it to a better account, and extract from it a higher kind of consolation. In a letter to a friend in 1814, he thus adverted to the disasters of his farming: "It pleased God to take away by death all my ewes and my lambs, and my long-horned cow, and my spotted bull, for if they had lived, and if I had kept

the farm of Corfardin, I had been a lost man to the world, and mankind should never have known the half that was in me."

After he had given up all he possessed to his creditors, and retired from the field stripped and baffled, but neither cast down nor dispirited, Hogg prepared himself to enter the world anew. He could still be the "Ettrick Shepherd," let his affairs be as unprosperous as they might, and return to his plaid and crook on the hill-side as if the interval had been only a twenty-four hours' *spree*. Thus he reckoned—but it was without his host; and on coming back to his native Ettrick, he found that though the hills and valleys were the same, all else had undergone a change. His old friends and associates were now estranged from him, and wherever he turned he saw nothing but averted looks. And how had he deserved this unkindly reception? If he was as poor as when he left them, had he not brought back at least the same heart, affections, and social qualities, the same contented spirit and love of industry, which had made him a general favourite among them? But such, even at so late a period, was still the usual treatment in Scotland of those who, in seeking to improve their means, and raise their condition, had been rash, improvident, and unsuccessful. To waste money, or even to lose it in a doubtful venture, was accounted worse than a misfortune, yea, it was a deadly sin; and he who had committed such a monstrous crime was regarded as one who had lost caste, and made himself unworthy of aid or sympathy. Such, until thirty or forty years ago, when the tide of mercantile speculation set in with a force that levelled every barrier, was the brand laid on bankruptcy and debt, and it was nothing more than the legitimate effect of that national prudence and thriftiness which had passed into a world-wide proverb. Hogg soon found that even in his own Ettrick he could not obtain a situation as a shepherd. The fact also that he had been a poet and a speculative farmer had unfitted him as was thought for being any longer a keeper of sheep. Even his old employers, to several of whom he applied, refused the offer of his services. After thus waiting for a whole winter seeking employment and finding none, he threw his plaid over his shoulders, bade farewell to the Forest and a rural life, and in February, 1810, came to Edinburgh. His resolution was to devote himself wholly to literature as his future occupation and means of subsistence. Nor was this purpose so unwise as at first sight it might appear. As a literary man, indeed, he had read little and learned almost nothing; but the creative power of poetry can be independent of the aids of scholarship. The success of his former experiment in publishing the "Mountain Bard" was enough to warrant repetition. Above all, he felt that his life was shut up to the choice of shepherd, farmer, or author, and that the first two of these professions were for the present withheld from him. Let him but win fame and money—and as a poet he felt confident that he would do both—he would then be able to secure the confidence of his friends, and settle down once more as shepherd or husbandman according as his choice might incline.

Animated by these calculations, Hogg commenced his new existence in the metropolis, but was not long in finding that there were new cares attached to it. In his commencement of a literary life as his profession and sole dependence, the noviciate cheers himself with the hope that he can write a work that will astound or captivate the world; but even when he has produced this marvel, he discovers that a still greater difficulty remains: it is to find a publisher. He cannot inoculate with his admiration, his enthusiasm, and his hopes, the matter-of-fact man of business, who poises the sacred MS. in his hands, counts the leaves, and reads no farther than the title-page; and until he has won for himself a name that will insure a paying amount of readers, and give the prospect of a profitable surplus, he must patiently contend with refusals and rebuffs, and persevere through the whole chapter of accidents. And somewhat of this the Shepherd was soon fated to learn, however unpalatable the lesson. "On going to Edinburgh," he says in his Autobiography, "I found that my poetical talents were rated nearly as low there as my shepherd qualities were in Ettrick. It was in vain that I applied to newsmongers, booksellers, editors of magazines, &c., for employment. Any of these were willing enough to accept of my lucubrations, and give them publicity, but then there was no money going—not a farthing; and this suited me very ill." Besides these attempts in miscellaneous literature to serve as a shift for the passing day, Hogg resolved to have recourse to a new volume of poetry. During his late years of trial, change, and disaster, he had discontinued the practice of writing verses, while his present condition was so unfavourable for its resumption, that to complete a volume he was obliged to draw upon those stores which he had created in earlier life, to the amount of two-thirds, while the rest were furnished by correspondents, and especially by his friend, Thomas M. Cunningham. He frankly confesses of the songs of this work: "In general they are not good, but the worst of them are all mine, for I inserted every ranting rhyme that I had made in my youth, to please the circles about the firesides in the country; and all this time I had never been once in any polished society—had read next to nothing—was now in the thirty-eighth year of my age, and knew no more of human life or manners than a child. I was a sort of natural songster, without another

advantage on earth." Having completed this miscellaneous collection, under the title of the "Forest Minstrel," Hogg offered the work to Constable. The great publisher demurred; but having a kindness for the Shepherd, he risked the printing of a thousand copies, which were to be sold at five shillings a copy. The work was published in Edinburgh in 1810, but except a present of an hundred guineas from the Countess of Dalkeith, to whom the work was dedicated, Hogg derived from it no profit whatever.

Dispirited by this fresh failure in poetry, and not having yet learned where his chief strength lay, the Shepherd resolved to change the experiment. He would try to attain distinction as a writer of prose, and in the departments of general literature, and establish for the purpose a weekly journal, devoted to *belles-lettres*, morals, and criticism! It would have been a bold adventure even for a universal scholar; but for one who was no scholar at all, it was the sublime of rashness. As if such an undertaking, also, had not been sufficiently venturous, he complicated the difficulty by resolving that his journal should exist independently of booksellers and publishers, whom he regarded as the very canker-worms and caterpillars of literature, and make its way through the world untrumpeted, by the strength of its own merits. Some such dream is very common to authors when they are unsuccessful at the commencement of their career. When their works have not taken the world by storm, they are ready to attribute the failure, not to their own demerits, but the mismanagement or hostility of the trade, and think how much better the enterprise might have fared if from first to last it had been wholly in their own hands. In such cases, however, they seldom attempt even at the worst to become their own publisher, while their first lucky hit is sufficient to reconcile them to the common business arrangements by which the literary world is governed. To find a printer was all that the Shepherd required, and this, he seems to have thought, could be had for the asking. Thus indeed he had found it when he ventured upon his first attempt, in which a slim volume of poetry was to be thrown off at a few pounds of cost, with the certain promise of repayment. But to print a large weekly periodical superintended by an unknown adventurer, and to depend upon its chances of success for repayment, was a risk which no mere dealer in types and paper would encounter, so that, although he offered security, they all rejected his advances: they would not print his journal unless a bookseller's name was attached to it as publisher. Had then the mechanical craftsmen joined the league by which he was to be kept hid from the world? He thought it must be so, as he went from one printing-office to another, and got nothing but refusals. At length, however, his zeal and perseverance were crowned with success; for in the course of his manifold researches among the trade, he stumbled upon a certain Mr. James Robertson, a bookseller in Nicolson Street, who undertook the printing on Hogg's own terms. This was all that was needed: let the journal but appear, no matter where or how, and the whole world would recognize its excellence and unite in supporting it! The first number of the work was published in the beginning of September, 1810. It was called the *Spy*, a somewhat ominous and ill-favoured name, and was printed weekly, on a quarto demy sheet, price fourpence.

A journal commenced under such auspices was from the outset doomed to misfortune and a short existence. It is true, that when the two first numbers appeared, there were as many subscribers as might have insured the continuance of the work. But from this point the *Spy* began to wax so coarse and unruly, that by the third or fourth number, seventy-three subscribers gave it up. The literary ladies also, at that time a highly influential body in Edinburgh, pronounced a death-sentence on the journal, by declaring that its conductor would never write a sentence that deserved to be read. This opposition only made Hogg more determined to go forward, and when told of the verdict of this fair jury, he exclaimed, "Gaping deevils! wha cares what they say? If I leeve ony time, I'll let them see the contrary o' that!" He went on with the air of an injured victim, and in the spirit of a self-devoted martyr; but this only provoked the active opposition of those who, having ceased to be subscribers, might perhaps have troubled themselves no further about the matter. They became in self-defence the positive enemies of the *Spy*, while its faults and short-comings afforded ground for their condemnations. But worse results than mere opposition and trouble, than pecuniary loss and literary failure, threatened to accrue from this unfortunate publication. Daily meetings for the management of its details were necessary between the printer and editor; and Robertson the bookseller, "who loved a joke and a dram," had for his favourite place of call a dingy public-house in the Cowgate. Thither he was wont to adjourn with the Shepherd, and there the arrangements of each forthcoming number were settled over a refection of rolls and whisky. The men of the old school in Edinburgh, of whom Robertson appears to have been one, had not yet fully died out, and this was their favourite way of transacting business affairs, at a period when business was but a thing of secondary account. But the place, the practice, and the gaunt, unwashed, ink-speckled pressmen with whom he was brought in contact, disgusted Hogg, and made him desirous,

at whatever price, to escape the contamination—more especially, as he felt that, after having first endured these coarse stimulating luncheons, he had learned to tolerate, and was even beginning to like them. He therefore dissolved his connection with the dram-drinking, joke-loving bibliopole, and transferred the printing of the *Spy* to the Messrs. Aikman, proprietors of the *Star* newspaper, who engaged to take their chance in publishing it, and give him half the profits. But no efforts of editor or publisher could resuscitate the unlucky journal: it expired after a year's brief and fretful existence; and its funeral was solemnized with a money squabble fought over its remains, in which, as was to be expected, the author was driven to the wall. "At the conclusion of the year," he tells us, "instead of granting me any profits, they [the Aikman's] complained of being minus, and charged me with the half of the loss. This I refused to pay, unless they would give me an account of all the numbers published, on the sale of which there should have been a great profit. This they could not do; so I paid nothing, and received as little. I had, however, a good deal to pay to Robertson, who likewise asked more; so that, after a year's literary drudgery, I found myself a loser rather than a gainer."

Such was the termination of this strange adventure in literary knight-errantry, by which everybody was to be taught everything by one who knew nothing. As such alone, the *Spy* would be a curiosity to the present generation; but unfortunately its numbers disappeared so quickly, that only a short time after its decease, not above five complete copies of it were in existence. We can therefore say nothing of its merits, except from Hogg's own account, which is misprising enough, while he laughs the loudest at the absurdity of the attempt. Still, however, there must have been not a little intrinsic merit in the *Spy;* for in addition to his own articles, which could scarcely have been dull or uninteresting, it was enriched with occasional contributions from Robert Sym (the Timothy Tickler of *Blackwood*), the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, Mr. Gray of the High School, Edinburgh, and several others, distinguished in the literature of the day. At an earlier date, indeed, it is possible that it might have secured a considerable share of the public favour, contrasted as it would have been with the prosy journalism of the period; and it is probable that upon such data, Hogg, who was not skilled in reading the signs of the times, may have founded his hopes of success. But a new era in this kind of writing had commenced. The *Edinburgh Review* had been in existence for eight years; the *Quarterly* was already in the field; and so high a standard for periodical authorship had been established, that the *Spy* could have no chance of success. If diligence and laborious perseverance could have made head against such chances, the attempt ought certainly to have fared better than it did; for Hogg's own contributions amounted to 415 pages of double-columned quarto, produced within the space of a twelvemonth—which he complacently instances as a proof of his industry. His closing farewell in the last number of the *Spy* must have raised the wonderment of those who were ignorant of his history. In alluding to the principal supporters of the work, he thus wrote: "They have, at all events, the honour of patronizing an undertaking quite new in the records of literature; for, that a common shepherd, who never was at school;[1] who went to service at seven years of age, and could neither read nor write with any degree of accuracy when thirty; yet, who, smitten with an unconquerable thirst after knowledge, should leave his native mountains and his flock to wander where they chose, come to the metropolis with his plaid wrapped about his shoulders, and all at once set up for a connoisseur in manners, taste, and genius—has much more the appearance of a romance than a matter of fact; yet a matter of fact it certainly is; and such a person is the editor of the *Spy.*"

Thus far the career of Hogg since his arrival in Edinburgh had been unfortunate: his labour and industry, though great, had produced him less than nothing. But in this case, the wind was tempered to the Shepherd himself, as it had been to his shorn lambs. If he was rich in nothing else, he was always rich in friends; and when his need was at the greatest, one of these was certain to interpose, like the *deus ex machina*, and free him from difficulties amidst which he was helpless. And such a one especially was Mr. John Grieve, who carried on the business of a hat manufacturer in Edinburgh. He was the son of the Rev. Mr. Grieve, a Cameronian minister, who lived at Cacrabank, in Ettrick; and being a neighbour, had become a friend of Hogg, at an early period. Being himself also somewhat of a poet, as well as a man of talent and some literary attainments, he set a high value upon the genius of Hogg, which he believed to be capable of everything; and when the latter came to Edinburgh, with nothing but the plaid upon his shoulders, Grieve, who was now a thriving man of business, received him into his home, and treated him as a brother. It was a piece of good fortune, such as few poets in their hap-hazard attempts, have met, or should expect to meet. Here, then, was a home and a counsellor for the Shepherd, when, but for these, he might have disappeared from the literary world, at his first entrance, and been no longer re-

[1] Perhaps he thought the few months of attendance at school which he had enjoyed in early boyhood scarcely worth taking into account.

membered; and the kindness of his early friend he has thus commemorated in his own simple, warm-hearted manner: "During the first six months that I resided in Edinburgh, I lived with him, and his partner, Mr. Scott, who, on a longer acquaintance, became as firmly attached to me as Mr. Grieve; and, I believe, as much so as to any man alive. We three have had many happy evenings together; we indeed were seldom separate when it was possible to meet. They suffered me to want for nothing, either in money or clothes; and I did not even need to ask these. Mr. Grieve was always the first to notice my wants and prevent them. In short, they would not suffer me to be obliged to any one but themselves for the value of a farthing; and without this sure support I could never have fought my way in Edinburgh. I was fairly starved into it, and if it had not been for Messrs. Grieve and Scott, would, in a very short time, have been starved out of it again."

The Shepherd now felt himself committed to literature as a profession in which he must either sink or swim. But his last attempt in the *Spy*, must have suggested to him the defects of his education and scantiness of general knowledge, that would be certain to impede him at every step. He had tried how far his capital would go, and had found it used up at the very outset. His experience of men and books had been even less than that of ordinary mortals, while he was too old to put himself to school, and supply his deficiencies by the ordinary modes of application. In this case, he concluded that a short cut to the acquirement of general knowledge, and aptitude in the use of it, might be secured by the practice of a debating society or forum. Every variety of intellectual character would thus be brought before him at once, and the choicest of its knowledge presented at a single view. It would be a living encyclopedia, in which all he sought would be found in light extemporaneous dippings, or an occasional wholesale plunge, instead of years of study and research, while the arts of thinking and expressing his thoughts would naturally come of themselves. Nor, judging from his own personal experience, was he greatly wrong in his calculation, however ridiculous it might seem. For the greater part of what he already knew he was more indebted to conversation than to books—and what might he not learn from a whole array of talented men collected under one roof, and striving their uttermost in intellectual competition? And then, too, his memory must have rebounded to the dear little meetings which he had enjoyed nearly twenty years earlier among the hills and muirs of Ettrick, when himself and other young shepherd lads were wont to muster in some lonely hut as a debating society, for the purposes of mutual instruction and improvement—and how greatly his young intellect had been invigorated, and his narrow range of knowledge expanded, by the discussions of these thrice-happy social evenings.

Under such considerations Hogg, though no longer a youth, allied himself with several aspiring young men of talent in the establishment of the Edinburgh Forum. It was an ambitious aim, but ambition in the right direction, and of the members who composed it not a few afterward fought their way to fame and fortune. The place of meeting was the church in Carruber's Close, which was rented for the purpose. As such an arena of intellectual gladiatorship would have been nothing without spectators to judge and applaud, the public were admitted to the debates, and to prevent an indiscriminate rush and overflowing, sixpence was the price of admission. Hogg, perhaps from his seniority, and the literary reputation he had already acquired, was appointed secretary of the forum, with a salary of £20 per annum, but which, he tells us, was never paid. His friends were dismayed at his idea of attempting oratory, and tried to dissuade him, by representing his unfitness to harangue a meeting of a thousand souls. They must also have felt, that at a period when even in Scotland no public speech could pass muster unless it was in classical English, and with somewhat of English pronunciation, the Shepherd's Doric dialect, broad and strong as when it rang in Ettrick Forest, and almost as strange to the ears of Edinburgh as to those of London, would be certain to call forth peals of ungovernable laughter, let the subject of his oration be as grave or pathetic as it might. As for him, he felt no sympathy with their fears, and at the weekly meetings of the forum was wont to speak generally once, and sometimes twice, in the course of the evening; and although at times his oratorical aberrations excited mirth, or even provoked censure, the innocence of his heart and rich originality of talent were always felt and acknowledged, so that he became the chief favourite of the auditory. Of the benefit he derived from this forensic training, and the important influence it exercised on his subsequent life, he has recorded the following testimony: "Private societies signify nothing; but a discerning public is a severe test, especially in a multitude, where the smallest departure from good taste, or from the question, was sure to draw down disapproval, and where no good saying ever missed observation and applause. If this do not assist in improving the taste, I know not what will. Of this I am certain, that I was greatly the better for it, and I may safely say, I never was in a school before. I might and would have written the 'Queen's Wake' had the forum never existed, but without the weekly lessons that I got there I could not have succeeded as I did."

While the Shepherd thus attended to the serious

business of the forum, and was realizing the benefits of such a summary process of education, it could not be expected that he would be insensible to the more ludicrous parts of such a literary institution. Whatever was grotesque in manner, absurd in character, or visionary in theory, was sure to have its safety-valves opened in such discussions; and scarcely was a night likely to elapse in which some one of the speakers, after he had returned home, and betaken himself to the task of retrospection, might not exclaim in anger or compunction, "How *could* I utter such nonsense!" Not only many of the forms, but also much of the phraseology of parliament was wont to be used at such meetings: an obscure orator under such inspiration expanded into an "honourable member on his legs," and Mr. President while calling out "order, order," was a very pretty miniature likeness of the Speaker of the House of Commons. Indeed, the forums of those days, whether in Edinburgh or elsewhere, needed nothing but the addition of an executive power to be such senates as Cato himself would have admired. In all this, there was a rich fund of the comic, which Hogg for the life of him could not overlook; and he embodied its principal points in a musical farce in three acts, under the title of "The Forum, a Tragedy for Cold Weather," in which he depicted some of these scenes, and caricatured the members, himself not excepted. It was sufficiently severe; in fact, from the nature of the subject it could not well have been otherwise; but having thus exploded his uncontrollable merriment, he had the good sense to shut up his farce under lock and key, so that no one ever saw it. His dramatic spirit being thus kindled, he wrote about the same time another musical drama of three acts for serious representation, and showed it to Mr. Siddons, the manager of the Edinburgh theatre, who approved of it, with the exception of some trivial scene, and promised that the piece, after this scene had been altered, should be brought upon the stage on the return of the season. This promise however was not fulfilled, notwithstanding the manager's good-will to the Shepherd, whom he made free of the theatre from year to year. In addition to these musical dramas, Hogg went a step higher by writing a tragedy called "The Hunting of Badlewe," of which only a few copies were published as an experiment upon the public taste; but the indifference with which it was received, made him abandon the hope of writing for the stage. He did not however stand alone in such a failure, as two of his distinguished poetical countrymen and contemporaries, Walter Scott and Allan Cunningham, were equally unsuccessful. It seems to be the doom of Scottish intellect never to excel in the drama, and the names of Home and Ramsay can scarcely be quoted as exceptions. Is the national indifference to the stage coupled with a natural incapacity to write for it? Scott, Hogg, and Cunningham, were not only great poets but admirable delineators of character, unrivalled managers of dialogue, and excellent in the construction of plot and incident. And yet, though they tried it, and laboured to succeed, they could not write good plays!

Hitherto, the Shepherd's fate had been a hard one; and although the courage with which he threw himself into literature as his stay and occupation, had been matched by the indomitable perseverance with which he returned to the trial after every discouraging defeat, he still had not succeeded. Of men, and books, and the world at large, he had remained so long in ignorance, that his education in these had commenced long after that of others had terminated: the demand upon him for action, had been inflicted while he was still a learner, and that for performance, made before the lesson that taught it had been half-way mastered. But now, and though thus late, his perseverance was to be successful. While he was still a student at the Forum, and perfecting himself in that strange school, the latest poetical era, of which Britain has enjoyed not one but four, and each equally distinguished for its brightness, had commenced. The great galaxy of poets which threw its light over the first half of the nineteenth century had now arisen, and the poetry of Scott and Byron had shaken our island from its prosaic slumber in which it had reposed since the days of good Queen Anne. It was not also the stilted or classical and artificial poetry of the old school which was obtaining the ascendency; but that of nature and reality, of passion and feeling, of men and women astir, active, and in earnest. This was quite the world for Hogg: "Nature and I against any two," might now have been his motto. He had precisely those qualities that were best suited for it, and he was certain to obtain a favourable audience. His kind and considerate friend Mr. Grieve, who besides being a poet, understood the signs of the times, and the way in which fortunes are made, advised him that now was the season to strike in, and Hogg was not slow in taking the hint. He had also some metrical tales and ballads lying beside him which he did not like to lose, and that might be available for the purpose. His plan for their introduction was the happiest that could be conceived; it was that of a competition of minstrels, in which each of these productions could be made to form a natural part of the work. His attempt being thus an easy one. he commenced in earnest, and in a few months his "Queen's Wake" was finished.

To obtain a critical judgment upon the "Wake," with a view to its correction and improvement—or at least to have his own ideas of its merits corroborated—the poet was now anxious to bring a part of his

production before a few discerning friends; but when he made the proposal, none cared to read it, or would consent to hear it read, with the exception of Mr. Grieve, who signified his approval and predicted its success. Hogg then bethought himself of Mr. Gray of the High School, and Mrs. Gray, both of them his friends and persons of talent, who had kindly contributed articles to the *Spy*, and invited them to Deanhaugh, where he then resided, to drink tea, and have part of the "Queen's Wake" read to them. But scarcely had the author got through half a page than the lady objected to a word which Mr. Grieve defended, and a debate ensued in which the poem itself was lost sight of, and the reading stopped for the rest of the evening. In courtesy to the disappointed author, the Grays appointed another evening when he was to bring his MS. to their house in Buccleugh Place. Then and there the reading was renewed with better promise than before, and Hogg had actually finished the third page, when Mr. Gray was told that a strolling minstrel had got into the lobby, and was reciting his poetry to the boarders. It was a curious although natural consequence of the first outburst of this poetical era, that many a poor crazy wight caught the infection who was too thick-hided for higher inspirations, and who, mistaking the mere clink of rhyme for the spirit of poetry, adopted verse-making as his trade and sole occupation; and as such men were generally as scant of coin as of ideas, they made a precarious livelihood by hawking their productions from house to house in the shape of little trumpery tracts or oral recitations, for which they obtained an alms under the softening form of a remuneration. It could not also be otherwise than that not a few of these poems must have possessed originality at least, as well as oddity to recommend them, so that both theme and reciter could furnish considerable merriment, while in still fewer cases they might possess such intrinsic worth as to redeem them from the lowliness of their parentage. It may have been some such rhymer of the better class who had now obtained possession of Mr. Gray's lobby, to neutralize the reading that was going on in the parlour, and eclipse for a season the attractions of the "Queen's Wake." On receiving the intimation, Mr. Gray went out to the party in the hall, leaving his friend no other auditor than a young lady in the parlour, to whom he might read his MS. or not as he pleased; and in about half an hour after a message came from the master of the house, inviting Hogg to the recitation that was going on without. However unintentional, it was an ill-judged and provoking invitation: it was asking the Shepherd to come and behold himself caricatured. Already irritated by the interruption and the nature of it, he complied, and found nothing better than "a crazy beggar repeating such miserable stuff as I had never heard before." The Shepherd pocketed his manuscript, and retired in no very gentle humour. He never afterwards attempted to read any of his new poems to Mr. Gray.

His attempts to find a patient friendly critic having thus failed, the next task of the author of the "Queen's Wake" was to find a publisher, an attempt still more difficult, and that threatened to be equally unsuccessful. His first application was to Mr. Constable, the prince of Edinburgh publishers, to whom he announced the plan of his work, and who being at the time out of humour, or pre-occupied with weightier speculations, received him coldly, and desired him to call again. The call was repeated accordingly, but the great bibliopole would have nothing to do with the poem until he had seen the manuscript. This was nothing more than a necessary precaution on the part of a publisher towards an author whose reputation was not yet fully established; and as such, it is usually received as a mark of friendly regard, and promise of favourable consideration. The demand however was repelled with, "What skill have you about the merits of a book?" "It may be so, Hogg," replied the other coolly, "but I know as well how to sell a book as any man, which should be some concern of yours; and I know how to buy one too!" The Shepherd had not yet learned the relative position of author and publisher: he seems to have thought that whatever the former was pleased to write the latter was bound to publish, and be as implicit in the whole affair as the compositor's stick. It had not yet occurred to him that the publisher, besides his mercantile hazard of outlay, has also a certain literary reputation at stake, which an issue of dull or unpopular works would be sure to damage. To this misapprehension and want of calculation, rather than to any positive injuries sustained at the hands of his publishers, or gratuitous inclination to attack them, we may safely refer much of our poet's indignation which he vented against the whole profession. After his short, sharp, conclusive answer, Mr. Constable proceeded to terms, and offered, if Hogg would procure two hundred subscribers to insure him from loss, to give him £100 for liberty to print one thousand copies of his new poem. The proposal was unpalatable, but the Shepherd was obliged to yield; and having got a few subscription papers printed and distributed among his friends, they were soon filled up with the stipulated number of subscribers. Some time before this, however, there was another publisher who was a candidate for the "Queen's Wake." This was Mr. Goldie, a young bookseller in Princes Street, with whom Hogg had become acquainted at the Forum: he asked and obtained a perusal of the poem, and was so greatly pleased with it that he offered the author higher terms than those of Mr. Constable,

engaging not only to give the same amount as the other, but the subscribers he had obtained into the bargain. This turned the scale, but before deciding Hogg returned to Mr. Constable, whose temper had been irritated by some recent misunderstanding with Sir Walter Scott: he was of course in no favourable mood to compete with the superior offer of the young publisher of Princes Street; and he vented a sweeping condemnation upon the whole tuneful tribe, proclaiming them the most impracticable and ungrateful of all the sons of Adam, and from whom he had met with more annoyance than from all the world beside. This storm drove back the discomfited poet upon Mr. Goldie, who became the publisher of the "Queen's Wake," which appeared in the spring of 1813.

As this work of the simple Shepherd of Ettrick Forest was the greatest and most consecutive of all his productions, those which he had hitherto published having been preludings in the way of trial rather than decisive efforts, he now felt that he was fairly committed, and that this new poem would either make or mar him. In the flutter of anxiety and suspense, he went up from Deanhaugh to Edinburgh on the day after the publication had appeared, looking at the windows of the booksellers' shops, where the "Queen's Wake" was duly placarded, but not daring to venture in, and peering about all eye and ear for even the faintest omen that might indicate its probable fate. At length a bird of good augury crossed his path in the form of a certain Mr. William Dunlop, a man from his own country side, a rough-boned man of strong common sense, and therefore such a critic as the Shepherd was inclined to value. This competent judge of Scottish poetry and true feeling, on seeing his wandering friend in the High Street, strode across the way to congratulate him, and the following droll dialogue, commenced by Dunlop, and so characteristic of both parties, forthwith ensued:—

"Ye useless poetical deevil that ye are! what hae ye been doing a' this time?"

"What doing, Willie; what do you mean?"

"Ye hae been pestering us wi' fourpenny papers an' daft shilly-shally sangs, an' bletherin' an' speakin' i' the Forum, an' yet had stuff in ye to produce a thing like this!"

"Ay, Willie; have you seen my new beuk?"

"Ay, faith, that I have, man; and it has cheatit me out o' a night's sleep. Ye hae hit the right nail on the head now. Yon's the very thing, sir."

"I'm very glad to hear you say sae, Willie; but what do you ken about poems?"

"Never ye mind how I ken: I gi'e you my word for it, yon's the thing that will do. If ye hadna made a fool o' yoursel' afore, man, yon wad hae sold better than ever a book sold. 'Od! wha wad hae thought there was as muckle in that sheep's-head o' yours?"

This was but the first note of a universal laudation. The delight produced by the poetry of the "Queen's Wake" was only equalled by the wonder that its author was nothing more than an uneducated shepherd; and even those who had previously surmised his talents, were gratified to find how greatly he had surpassed their calculations. Two editions of the "Wake" were quickly sold, and its author appeared to have got at last upon the high road that leads not only to fame but fortune. Fame indeed was already reached and by one great bound; but the other substantial part of the feat was still to seek—and apparently never to be found. When two editions had been exhausted and a third printed, the publisher became bankrupt, and Hogg, who had calculated upon the profits of the work for the liquidation of some old farm debts that pressed heavily upon him, as well as some capital for his future wants, saw himself reduced to his former condition. This was enough to exhaust his patience and embitter his temper, more especially at a period when poetry was so remunerative, and when poems no better than his own had raised their authors to comfort and even to affluence. When the crash occurred he was also unable to rescue any portion of his own property from the wreck, and could do little else than look on amidst the general scramble. It was fortunate that at such a crisis friends were at hand whose exertions made amends for his own helplessness. These were Mr. Blackwood the publisher, one of the trustees upon the bankrupt estate, to whom this misfortune first introduced the poet—the two Messrs. Bridges, and Mr. Samuel Aitken the head trustee. Under their influential exertions, what remained in the bankrupt stock of the third edition of the "Queen's Wake" was secured for the benefit of the author, and in the form of a fourth edition was made to produce for him a comfortable reversion. He had thus the consolation of saving a fragment out of what threatened to become a wholesale loss.

Although the bard of Ettrick was not rich in money but continued to be as poor as ever, his amiable simplicity and originality of character, and growing literary reputation, which had won their way through such opposing difficulties, had made him rich in friends, by whom his cares of life were lightened, and in not a few cases its disasters averted. Indeed, it could not well be otherwise with such a character as the author of the "Queen's Wake," so that even those who laughed the loudest at his eccentricities, or were the most annoyed by his blunders, were his most zealous apologists and admirers. These friends also were not mere tuft-hunters, or dull prosaic personages anxious to buoy up their own insignificance by attaching themselves

to a man of mark; but men of renown, whose names throw an imperishable lustre over the literary history of the nineteenth century, of which they form the brightest ornaments. And first in the list may be mentioned John Wilson, that man of every phase of character and genius, the effect of whose presence is still felt as keenly as if he had only yesterday passed away.

The first acquaintanceship of Hogg with Wilson was through the "Isle of Palms," the earliest work of the latter, published in the year 1812. It was in the following year, when his own "Queen's Wake" appeared, that Hogg wrote a most favourable critique on the "Isle of Palms" in the *Scottish Review*, a quarterly journal of some reputation at that period. Hogg was delighted with the fanciful imagery, glowing descriptions, and musical language of this now almost forgotten poem, but though he could make large allowances for the improbable, there was one circumstance in the wondrous narrative which he could not get over:—it was, that the voyagers in their way to the Isle of Palms, did not seem to be victualled for so long a voyage. Desirous of knowing more about the author, he made many inquiries, but received such contradictory and bewildering accounts that he resolved to go out of his way by seeking Wilson's acquaintanceship. He expressed this wish by letter, coupled with an invitation to come and dine with him at his lodgings in Gabriel's Road; and Wilson, to whom such an adventure was full of promise, readily complied. The two poets, and Grieve, the friend of Hogg, dined together, and from that moment a friendship was formed between the pair that materially influenced the career of both, and which only death dissolved. What pity that the conversations of that evening have not been detailed!—they would have formed the first, and perhaps the best of the *Noctes*. The earliest subject which Hogg was impatient to introduce was a glowing eulogy on the "Isle of Palms;" but here he could not forego the weighty objection that was still lying on his brain: "Ye ken, that it was arrant nonsense to set a man and wife awa sailing ower the sea wi' naething to fill their stamach but the cauld wind. You shonld most certainly hae put some o' provisions in the boat." The quizzical reply of Wilson, delivered with a grave matter-of-fact countenance, was ready in an instant: "Oh, sir, they were on the water only a single night; and, moreover, let me tell you, filling the belly is scarcely one of the poetical occupations. You know, sir, *they may have had bread and cheese in their pockets*, without my taking the trouble of mentioning that in the poem." This was so satisfactory to the Shepherd, that he replied, "Faith, I dare say you're right after a'; but, do you ken, the thing never struck me, man?"

At this time the principal residence of Wilson was his beautiful mansion of Elleray, among the lakes of Cumberland: and here he alternated his hours or days of study with such stirring sports and romantic adventures, as seemed the necessaries of life to one of such an enthusiastic spirit and buoyant athletic frame. It was no wonder therefore that Hogg, to whom such qualities were congenial, should have been so speedily and so closely drawn to his new friend. While Wilson was in Edinburgh, they were scarcely twenty-four hours asunder, and some time afterwards Hogg spent a month with him at Elleray. Their country life during this period was characteristic of both. When the weather invited, they were rambling among the mountains, boating on the lakes, visiting, and enjoying the society of those distinguished poets who had clustered together in this congenial locality, where the beauty and grandeur of nature waited at their thresholds, to gladden and inspire them. But when this transient beauty of the scenery was clouded by the darkened sky, or extinguished by the rain, so that they found it preferable to remain within doors, the two betook themselves to their proper work, and had a competition in poetry—a "Queen's Wake" as Hogg terms it—in which they tried between breakfast and dinner time who should produce the best poem. When Wilson composed, it was his practice to enunciate the verses in a loud sonorous key while writing them; and as his voice swelled with the course of progress, the loud chant, when he reckoned himself particularly successful, would rise into a lion-like roar. It was like the shout of one of Homer's or Ossian's heroes borne to the ear of an antagonist, the menace and partly the cause of defeat even before the tug of combat had commenced. From his room, which was an adjoining one, Hogg could hear every note of this poetical gamut, and learn from it the progress of his rival; but when it rose to its loudest and most triumphant swell he was then wont to say to himself, "Gude faith! it's a' ower wi' me this day." In this manner the hours were spent till dinner time, and in the evening their respective productions were read, tried, and criticized; Mrs. Wilson being generally umpire or judge. If Mr. Wilson had failed to please himself, his looks when he emerged from his study to the dining-room were clouded with disappointment, but in a few moments this moodiness disappeared, and Christopher North, the young and buoyant, was all himself again. At the trial and comparison of their respective pieces which followed, there was no lack of playful captiousness, harmless satire, and all the merriment of a literary tribunal. "I never saw better sport," says Hogg, "than we had in comparing these poems. How manfully each stood out for the merits of his own! But Mrs.

Wilson generally leaned to my side, nominally at least. . . . . These were halcyon days which we shall never see again!" Of the poems which he produced under these inspiring competitions, he instances particularly the "Ode to Superstition," "The Stranger," and "Isabelle," the second being an imitation of Wordsworth, and the last of Coleridge's "Christabel," both of which are included in the "Poetic Mirror."

But the friendship of John Wilson was not the only advantage which the poetical Shepherd secured by this pilgrimage to Cumberland. It was also the means of bringing him into contact with the learned, gentle, amiable Southey, between whom and Hogg there were congenial points of character, which soon united them to each other, and established an affectionate epistolary intercourse between them for years. It was on his way to Elleray, and while stopping at a hotel in Keswick that he notified his arrival to the laureate, who at once visited him, and gave him a cordial invitation to spend two days with him at Greta Hall. The Shepherd gladly complied, and a close friendship sprang up at once between the bard of the Forest and him of the study, not the less perhaps that each found in the other what was wanting in himself. Of the letters of Southey to Hogg only two have been preserved, in one of which, written on the 1st of December, 1814, acknowledging the receipt of a copy of the third edition of the "Queen's Wake," and one of the "Spy," Southey thus expresses himself: "Dear Hogg,—Thank you for your books. I will not say that the 'Queen's Wake' has exceeded my expectations, because I have ever expected great things from you, since in 1805 I heard Walter Scott, by his own fireside at Ashiestiel, repeat 'Gilmanscleuch.' When he came to that line—'I gac' him a' my goud, father'—the look and the tone with which he gave it were not needed to make it go through me. But 'The Wake' has equalled all that I expected. The improvements in the new edition are very great, and they are in the two poems which were most deserving of improvement, as being the most impressive and the most original. Each is excellent in its way, but 'Kilmeny' is of the highest character; 'The Witch of Fife' is a real work of fancy—'Kilmeny' a fine one of imagination, which is a higher and rarer gift. These poems have given general pleasure throughout the house; my eldest girl often comes out with a stanza or two of 'The Witch,' but she wishes sometimes that you always wrote in English. 'The Spy' I shall go through more at leisure." The rest of the letters, which are chiefly filled with complaints against Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh Review*, would be more appropriate to a life of Robert Southey, than a memoir of James Hogg.

Another literary acquaintance which Hogg made at this time was with the celebrated Wordsworth. This was in 1814, when the great poet of the Lakes, after publishing the "Excursion," made a tour into Scotland. The Shepherd, who had read several of his productions, and greatly admired them, notwithstanding their unmitigated condemnation by the *Edinburgh Review* and other journals, was one day invited to dinner by Mr. James Wilson, the entomologist, and brother of Christopher North, who assured him that he should meet with Mr. Wordsworth, whom he would like very much, as he was an exceedingly intelligent person. "Ay," said Hogg, "I daresay he is; at all events, he is allowed to be a good judge of horse-flesh." He was thinking of a person of the same name, the Tattersal of the northern capital; and from the common-place title of *Mr.* being on this occasion prefixed to the name of Wordsworth, he imagined he was to dine with the jockey of Edinburgh, instead of the bard of Mount Rydal. After the mistake had been kept up for some time, he was delighted to learn that the person in question was no other than the great poet whose productions he had already learned so highly to appreciate. "I listened to him that night," he says, "as to a superior being, far exalted above the common walks of life." In the course of his northern journey towards the pastoral districts, which Wordsworth made, accompanied by Mrs. Wordsworth and Dr. Anderson, editor of the works of the English poets, Hogg joined the travellers at Traquair, and became their pilot through Ettrick, and along the windings of the Yarrow to its source. The father of Hogg, a venerable man, above eighty years of age, was still alive, and received the tourists at his little cot with Scottish hospitality, a circumstance which Wordsworth has noted in his diary; and the poetical result of this journey was "Yarrow Visited." The short critique which the Shepherd delivers, in passing, upon this well-known poem, is worth a whole chapter of formal reviewing. "In tracing the windings of the pastoral Yarrow, from its source to its confluence with the sister stream, the poet was in great good humour, delightful, and most eloquent. Indeed, it was impossible to see Yarrow to greater advantage; and yet it failed of the anticipated inspiration; for 'Yarrow Visited,' is not so sweet or ingenious a poem as 'Yarrow Unvisited;' so much is hope superior to enjoyment."

This commencement of the Shepherd's intercourse with Wordsworth was continued in repeated visits; but the friendships of poets, like the affection of lovers, are apt to be crossed by strange jealousies and quarrels, that often prevent them from running smooth to the end, even though they should continue to flow in their old channel. A ground of offence also could easily arise between two such poets, in both of whom vanity was so predominant. Let it

be remembered, however, that this quality of vanity which they possessed, was in their case so heroic as to be almost exalted into a virtue. It armed Wordsworth in his warfare against the whole critical world, until he had established that school of poetry which they so unmercifully condemned and ridiculed. It animated Hogg with the conviction, that in spite of all his deficiencies, there was something within him better than learning, station, and wealth, and which would lead him to fame and distinction, let the world laugh as it pleased. Was it strange, then, that a quarrel should occur out of this same vanity to interrupt the friendship of such a pair? It came accordingly, and in the following fashion, if the Shepherd's own account of it is to be implicitly received:—

"It chanced one night, when I was there [at Wordsworth's house], that there was a resplendent arch across the zenith, from the one horizon to the other, of something like the *aurora borealis*, but much brighter. It was a scene that is well remembered, for it struck the country with admiration, as such a phenomenon had never before been witnessed in such perfection; and as far as I could learn, it had been more brilliant over the mountains and pure waters of Westmoreland than anywhere else. Well, when word came into the room of the splendid meteor, we all went out to view it; and, on the beautiful platform at Mount Rydal, we were all walking in two's and three's, arm in arm, talking of the phenomenon, and admiring it. Now, be it remembered, that Wordsworth, Professor Wilson, Lloyd, De Quincey, and myself, were present, besides several other literary gentlemen, whose names I am not certain that I remember aright. Miss Wordsworth's arm was in mine, and she was expressing some fears that the splendid stranger might prove ominous, when I, by ill luck, blundered out the following remark, thinking that I was saying a good thing: 'Hout m'em! it's neither mair nor less than joost a trecumphal airch, raised in honour of the meeting of the poets.' 'That's not amiss. Eh? Eh?—that's very good,' said the professor laughing. But Wordsworth, who had De Quincey's arm, gave a grunt, and turned on his heel, and leading the little opium-chewer aside, he addressed him in these disdainful and venomous words:—'Poets? Poets? —What does the fellow mean?—Where are they?'"

This was certainly too bad; nay, it was absolutely intolerable. And coming too from the mouth of one whose claim to be a veritable poet was scarcely as yet recognized!—it is no wonder that Hogg took it in high dudgeon, and with all his admiration of Wordsworth, could never forget it. Uttered also, although it was in the ear of De Quincey, it was not likely there to slumber; for the opium-eater never valued himself upon secrecy, either in his own affairs or those of his acquaintances and friends. Accordingly, the tale took wing, was aggravated and enlarged as it flew, and was finally perpetuated in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. Such was the "triumphal arch scene," as it was commonly called, and the "where are they?" by which the Ettrick Shepherd was contemptuously rated as a mere rhymer and ballad-grinder. The words were stamped upon his heart as with a red-hot branding-iron; and although he often tried to persuade himself that De Quincey had invented them, the hope could not rise to a full conviction. His wrath, however, found vent and partial relief in the broad caricatures of Wordsworth's style, which he gave in the "Poetic Mirror."

Mention has already been made of the assistance which Hogg received while conducting the *Spy*, from Mr. Robert Sym, the Timothy Tickler of *Blackwood*, who not only exerted his influence in recommending the journal, but wrote several able articles for its pages, and sent to the editor, but anonymously, some valuable suggestions for its proper management and improvement. But who was this Mr. Sym, who kept himself so retired, and was yet so frank and efficient with his aid? Although Hogg in course of time learned his monosyllabic name, he thought it could only belong to some very little man about Leith, until he was ushered into a mansion in George's Square, and to its master, the owner of the name—a stately, noble, aristocratic-looking gentleman, considerably above six feet in height. He could not well have found a more desirable friend than Mr. Sym, who combined, with great natural talents, wit, and geniality, a refined taste, and extensive range of literary knowledge, both in ancient and modern subjects. With such an acquaintance, and the society that usually assembled under his roof, Hogg found those opportunities for self-improvement, which, amidst all his trials and vicissitudes, he had never neglected. To an accomplished scholar like Mr. Sym, sated with artificial intellectualities, nothing could be so refreshing as the genuine natural character and original genius of the talented shepherd of Ettrick; while Hogg could feel a double admiration for those qualities in the other, of which fate had deprived himself, but of which he was eager to catch the inspiration. It is not between people who are like, but positively unlike each other, yet having one or more sympathies in common, as connecting links, that the closest alliances are formed; and this holds good as a general rule, both in love and friendship, so that we can easily understand Hogg, when he says, "He and I never differed in one single sentiment in our lives, excepting on the comparative merits of some Strathspey reels."

This allusion to music reminds us of one of the poet's earliest predilections, when he was wont as a

young lad to astonish the cattle in the byre at night with his fiddling—and occasionally the bipeds without, who thought they were serenaded by a ghost, or something worse. This love continued with him to the last; and while other poets contented themselves with an imaginary lyre, he had made himself a wondrous proficient in the use of the violin, so that he could delight with it even the most fastidious audiences. Fortunately, it happened that Mr. Sym was also an enthusiastic performer upon the same instrument, and thus its resources were always at hand when conversational subjects were exhausted. The following account given by Hogg, is a rich picture of the close of their evenings, dashed off in his happiest manner:—

"At a certain period of the night, our entertainer knew, by the longing looks which I cast to a beloved corner of the dining-room, what was wanting. Then he would take out a small gold key that hung by a chain of the same precious metal to a particular button-hole, and stalk away as tall as the life, open two splendid fiddle-cases, and produce their contents, first the one, and then the other; but always keeping the best to himself. I'll never forget with what elated dignity he stood straight up in the middle of that floor and rosined his bow: there was a twist of the lip, and an upward beam of the eye, that were truly sublime. Then down we sat, side by side, and began—at first gently, and with easy motion, like skilful grooms, keeping ourselves up for the final heat, which was slowly but surely approaching. At the end of every tune we took a glass, and still our enthusiastic admiration of the Scottish tunes increased—our energies of execution redoubled, till, ultimately, it became not only a complete and well-contested race, but a trial of strength to determine which should drown the other. The only feelings short of ecstasy that came across us in these enraptured moments, were caused by hearing the laugh and joke going on with our friends, as if no such thrilling strains had been flowing. But if Sym's eye chanced at all to fall on them, it instantly retreated upwards again in mild indignation. To his honour, be it mentioned, he has left me a legacy of that inestimable violin, provided that I outlive him. But not for a thousand such would I part with my old friend."

To become acquainted with Sym and Wilson, was also to be acquainted with John Gibson Lockhart, just returned from a continental tour, and called to the Scottish bar, but which, like his friend Wilson, he was to forsake for the more alluring pursuits of literature. Lockhart was at this time a young man exuberant with wit, fun, and mischief, which he delighted to play off upon all within his reach; and the unsuspecting, unsophisticated simplicity of the Shepherd was to him like the discovery of a gold mine, upon the resources of which he could draw at will. Hogg therefore, who admired Lockhart's talents, was mystified by his behaviour and mode of living, bamboozled by his stories, and annoyed by his practical jokes, without being able to be angry with him, or even to detect his roguery; and after an interview with this young mischief-loving Mephistopheles, he was certain to be left in a haze of bewilderment, that was often doubly deepened instead of being dispersed at their next meeting. One day, for instance, the Shepherd was absolutely petrified to find Lockhart entertaining six white gentlemen at dinner, with six black footmen waiting behind their chairs! Anticipating nothing but speedy ruin to his youthful friend from such an extravagant style of living, he remonstrated with him upon the consequences, but received an answer quite in character: these poor fellows, Lockhart said, were very useful and obliging, and did not look for much wages beyond a mouthful of meat. This inconsiderate humanity Hogg justly thought did not make matters better, and he mentioned his alarm to a lady, but soon found that his apprehension was groundless—that Lockhart kept only one black servant, who, when his master gave an entertainment, was wont to invite his sable brethren of other establishments to assist him in waiting at table, and afterwards to share with him the good things that were left. In like manner, if Hogg wished to obtain from Lockhart some piece of literary intelligence, or some important fact, he was sure to be sent as far wrong as possible, and was sometimes in the plight of one who should be dropped into Timbuctoo instead of London, or among the camels in Grand Cairo instead of the literati of Oxford. But when *Blackwood's Magazine* was started, it was then that the widest sluices of Lockhart's wicked wit were opened; and when Hogg, who was so greatly interested in the publication, wished to ascertain by whom such and such articles were produced, he was certain to have them fathered upon the wrong persons, and generally on the most unlikely persons that could be found. And all this, too, delivered with such sincerity of look, and truthful matter-of-fact words, voice, and demeanour—it was too bad! No man, however, could be so impenetrable in his credulity as to be deceived for the hundredth time without suspicion, and Hogg at last awoke to the conviction that this demure looking satirist was not always to be trusted. On one occasion, when Lockhart was thus cramming him, he ventured to express his doubts to one of the company, who flared up with, "I hope you are not suspecting your young friend of telling you a falsehood?" "Haud your tongue, Davie," cried Hogg, "for ye ken nacthing about it. Could ye believe it, man, that callant never tauld me the truth a'

his days but aince, an' that was merely by chance, an' without the least intention on his part."

But a still more illustrious acquaintance than any of the preceding was Lord Byron, with whom Hogg about this time entered into correspondence, and who seems to have regarded the frank, unsophisticated spirit of the Shepherd, as an oasis in his pilgrimage amidst a world of which he was sick and weary, and where he was continually in quest of a resting-place, but unable to find it. His lordship recognized the genius of the author of the "Queen's Wake," and responded with alacrity to his advances, so that letters continued to pass between them, which were all the more cordial from the impossibility of personal intercourse. On these occasions, Byron's letters were kind, cheerful, and affectionate, being characterized also with more than his usual wit, and less of his wonted gloom and misanthropy. It is unfortunate, however, that beyond this general notice, we can say nothing of their contents, as Hogg was in the habit of destroying the numerous letters that were sent to him, trusting perhaps to the powers of his memory in recalling the particulars of those which were worth remembering.

We must now turn from the Ettrick Shepherd's acquaintances to his own literary career, in which his exertions, although continued by fits and starts, were neither few nor trivial. He was still without a settled home, and although Edinburgh was his chief place of residence, he was wont in the summer to make a tour into the Highlands, and stay for some time at Kinnaird House in Athole, the seat of Chalmers Izett, Esq., whose lady took a deep interest in his welfare and poetical success, as was manifested by her many judicious advices both as to his conduct and compositions. He informs us also, in passing, that had he attended more to these, it would have been better for him in the end. During his Highland tour in the summer of 1814, he was attacked by a severe cold, in consequence of which an arrangement was made that he should reside two or three weeks at Kinnaird House for his recovery. Since the publication of the "Queen's Wake," every friend of Hogg had become aware of the great fund of unexplored genius which lay within him, and the desirableness of bringing it to the light; and among these was Mrs. Izett, who was anxious not only that the world should know what her rustic *protégé* was worth, but that he should also be benefited in his scanty fortunes by the exertion of his own talents and industry. When he had settled at Kinnaird House, she accordingly conducted him one morning into a little study furnished with books and writing materials. "Now, I do not wish," she said, "to curtail your fishing hours, since you seem to delight so much in it; but whenever you have a spare hour, either evening or morning, you can retire to this place, either to read or write, as the humour suits you." The answer of Hogg would have been that of most men so circumstanced: "Since you will set me down to write, you must choose a subject for me, for I have nothing in hand and have thought of nothing." "How can you be at a loss for a subject," she replied, "and that majestic river rolling beneath your eyes?" He still demurred, and thus expressed his doubt, "Well, though I consider myself exquisite at descriptions of nature, and mountain scenery in particular, yet I am afraid that a poem wholly descriptive will prove dull and heavy." The objection was met with, "You may make it the shorter; only write something to prevent your mind from rusting."

Being thus committed beyond the power of flinching, the poet addressed himself to his task. A poem was to be written upon the river Tay, which he was resolved should not be wholly descriptive, and the plan gradually expanded into a tale of five cantos. The structure of the verse was also to be chosen in keeping with the subject, and after two hours of deliberation, the Spenserian stanza was chosen in preference. "That is the finest verse in the world," said Hogg to himself, "it rolls off with such majesty and grandeur. What an effect it will have in the description of mountains, cataracts, and storms!" It was a natural as well as happy conclusion, and those who understand the principles by which the music or mere sound of versification is regulated will recognize the justice of his choice. But another motive, and one too of an ambitious nature, had great weight in the poet's selection. "I was fond of the Spenserian measure," he tells us; "but there was something in the best models that always offended my ear. It was owing to this: I thought it so formed that every verse ought to be a structure of itself, resembling an arch, of which the two meeting rhymes in the middle should represent the key-stone, and on these all the strength and flow of the verse should rest. On beginning this poem, therefore, I had the vanity to believe that I was going to give the world a new specimen of this stanza in its proper harmony." Under these circumstances "Mador of the Moor" was produced. As a poem it is rich, but as a tale it is naught. Such, when it first appeared, was the verdict of the world, which has never as yet been reversed. The events are too improbable even for a poetical romance, and to have been fully brought about would have required the interposition of two or three enchanters, a miracle, and a ghost. Accordingly, "Mador" can only be prized by those who have so pure a relish for poetry of a high order, that they will gladly accept it let its accompaniments in the way of narrative be what they may. Even the best parts of the story also were decried as feeble imitations of Scott's "Lady of the Lake."

After having finished "Mador of the Moor," which

was written in a very short time, as were most of his productions, Hogg, who was warmed, not wearied by the effort, planned and commenced a volume of romantic poems to be entitled "Midsummer Night Dreams." The first of the series was "Connel of Dee," and the second the "Pilgrims of the Sun;" and from these two specimens every one will regret that he was not allowed to follow his own bent, and prosecute the plan to the end. But unfortunately he was overruled by the advice of a friend in whose judgment he placed the highest confidence. This was Mr. James Park of Greenock, to whom he showed the two poems in manuscript, and who advised him to abandon the plan, and publish the "Pilgrims of the Sun," as a separate work. This advice the Shepherd adopted—and then came his wonted trial of finding a publisher. Having still a desire to retain his old friend Constable in that capacity, he applied to the great publisher, who received him with the following serio-comic address: —"Hogg, you are a very extraordinary fellow! you are a man of very great genius, sir! I dont know if ever there was such another man born!" Seeing his auditor wince, he continued—"Nay, it is all true, sir; I do not jest a word—I never knew such a genius in my life. I am told, that since the publication of the "Queen's Wake" last year, you have three new poems, all as long, and greatly superior to that, ready for publication. By G—, sir, you will write Scott, and Byron, and every one of them, off the field." On being brought down from this flight of banter to the business in hand, Mr. Constable excused himself from publishing the poem on account of the large weighty works he had undertaken, by which his sale of any lighter productions would be impeded, but proposed to transfer its publication to Mr. Miller, becoming himself security for the payment, and offering also to promote the circulation of the work through his country agents, reviews, and magazines. Hogg closed with an offer that secured two publishers instead of one in his behalf, forgetting a well-known proverb about stools, and Mr. Miller having agreed with the arrangement by which he was to pay £86 for the liberty of printing a thousand copies, Hogg left Edinburgh, expecting that the proofs of the "Pilgrims of the Sun" would soon follow. But weeks elapsed and not a single sheet was forthcoming. On inquiry it appeared that the poem had been submitted to a critical jury, and that their verdict was so unfavourable that Mr. Miller was unwilling to publish it except upon compulsion. The Shepherd indignantly reclaimed his manuscript, which was afterwards accepted by Mr. John Murray, the London publisher, upon the same terms; but he too, after consigning it to the perusal of his friends, received such an unfavourable opinion of its merits, that he refused to attach his name to it as the publisher. Amidst such difficulties, and under such evil auspices, the "Pilgrims of the Sun," was begrudgingly published. Hogg stormed as well he might at the judgment by which the work was already condemned; and when checked by his friend Mr. Grieve, with the suggestion, that the literary people both of England and Scotland must be better judges than himself, he consoled himself with the thought that it would be long before any of them could write a poem as good. The fate of this production did not belie the circumstances of its birth. The varied measures in which it is written, so happily correspondent with its transitions from earth to heaven, and from mundane to celestial events and emotions—the wildly mystical and supernatural incidents which compose the framework of the narrative, and which are so successfully blended with the realities of every-day life—were as yet too startling to the public taste to be either appreciated or welcomed. Our literature had not as yet been permeated by the German spirit, nor our imaginations familiarized with the wild and wonderful of De la Motte Foucque, Hoffman, and others of that Teutonic wonder-working school; and the "Pilgrims of the Sun" had to abide its trial before a tribunal of hard-headed metaphysical Scotchmen, and matter-of-fact Englishmen—as unfavourable a jury as could well have been selected. We can easily guess how different the fate of the poem would have been if published twenty years later; and how those who luxuriate among Undines, Lurelies, mesmeric trances, and dual individualities, would have turned to the higher, purer, and more poetical conceptions of the "Pilgrims." We can even well imagine that were the present world of readers to hold a new trial upon the work, they would reverse the sentence of their predecessors, and do nothing more than justice to this beautiful production by ranking it as one of the best of its kind. But it was born too soon to be understood or appreciated, and it was allowed to perish under the general neglect. It sold heavily although favourably noticed in several reviews, and no second edition was called for. The reception of the work however was more favourable in America, where it was reprinted, and ten thousand copies of it sold. The estimate of the author himself respecting its merits is very modest: "It is indeed a faulty poem," he says, "but I think no shame of it; neither, I trust, will any of my friends when I am no more." The poem of "Mador of the Moor," though earliest written, was published at a later date; but it was even less popular than the "Pilgrims of the Sun," while neither of them tended to improve their author's finances.

Thus far the fortunes of the Ettrick Shepherd seemed to have been ruled by a fatality that made success impossible. From his lowly condition, he had raised himself by sheer unaided merit to a high

rank among the distinguished of the age, and the most eminent in talent were proud to fraternize with him. But though he had written works that might have secured a comfortable independence to any other man, he still continued to be poor. He could not even console himself like Dogberry with the boast that he was "one that had had losses," for he scarcely could be said to have ever won anything to lose. He had not even among his other trials been subjected to the temptation of squandering, or enabled to claim the merit of one who could be wise and wary with what was his own. It was evident by this time that instead of winning a fortune, he would scarcely be able to obtain a bare livelihood by authorship. Some such suspicion seems to have crossed him even when his fame was at the highest, and induced him to betake himself to surer patronage than he had found as yet in booksellers and the public. His plan was laid in his own characteristic fashion, and executed by the following strange letter:—

"To her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch, Dalkeith Palace. Favoured by Messrs. Grieve & Scott, hatters, Edinburgh.

"Ettrickbank, *March* 17, 1814.

May it please your Grace,—I have often grieved you by my applications for this and that: I am sensible of this, for I have had many instances of your wishes to be of service to me, could you have known what to do for that purpose. But there are some eccentric characters in the world, of whom no person can judge or know what will prove beneficial, or what may prove their bane. I have again and again received of your grace's private bounty, and though it made me love and respect you the more, I was nevertheless grieved at it. It was never your grace's money that I wanted, but the honour of your countenance; indeed, my heart could never yield to the hope of being patronized by any house save that of Buccleuch, whom I deemed bound to cherish every plant that indicated anything out of the common way on the braes of Ettrick and Yarrow.

"I know you will be thinking that this long prelude is to end with a request: No, madam! I have taken the resolution of never making another request. I will however tell you a story, which is, I believe, founded on a fact:—

"There is a small farm at the head of a water called . . . possessed by a mean fellow named . . . A third of it has been taken off and laid into another farm—the remainder is as yet unappropriated. Now, there is a certain poor bard, who has two old parents, each of them upwards of eighty-four years of age; and that bard has no house nor home to shelter those poor parents in, or cheer the evening of their lives. A single line from a certain very great and very beautiful lady, to a certain Mr. Riddle,[1] would insure that small pendicle to the bard at once. But she will grant no such thing! I appeal to your grace if she is not a very bad lady that!—I am your grace's ever obliged and grateful

"James Hogg,
"The Ettrick Shepherd."

The kind benefactress to whom this strange appeal was addressed, was Harriet, Duchess of Buccleuch, to whom, when Countess of Dalkeith, Hogg had dedicated his "Forest Minstrel," and who sent the bard a substantial acknowledgment in the form of a hundred guineas through the hands of Sir Walter Scott. From her singularly amiable disposition, and the interest she had taken in his wayward fortunes, the Shepherd was justified in hoping that his application would not be wholly unsuccessful; but he received no answer. This silence was owing to no abatement of her interest in his behalf, but the dread of "seeing herself in print," if an answer should be returned. His suspense, however, if he felt any, was brief, as she died five months after. This event, which might have extinguished his hopes, only served to realize them; and her affectionate husband, when the Shepherd was spoken of, in a visit of condolence from Sir Walter Scott, said, "I must now consider this poor man's case as *her* legacy." Not being disposed to displace a tenant though he might be "a mean fellow," the duke looked about for some unappropriated pendicle, and this he found in the small farm of Altrive Lake, on the braes of Yarrow. Hogg was accordingly surprised and delighted by a letter from his grace, announcing his appointment to this farm, which was to be held at a rent merely nominal—and it was indeed *nominal*, for no rent was ever claimed. The value of the gift was also increased by the intimation, that it was owing to the kindness of the late duchess, who, while she lived, had been anxious that he should obtain such a residence. It was a happy windfall—the sum total of repayment for years of fruitless labour and bitter disappointment. "The boon," says Hogg in his Autobiography, "was quite unsolicited and unexpected, and never was a more welcome one conferred on an unfortunate wight, as it gave me once more a habitation among my native moors and streams, where every face was that of a friend and each house was a home, as well as a residence for life to my aged father."

Although this was a comfortable provision for life, some interval of time had to elapse before the new owner could enter into possession; and exertion being in the meantime necessary for the passing day, Hogg resolved to try a new literary device, by

[1] This was Major Riddell, chamberlain of the Duke of Buccleuch.

which not only his present wants might be relieved, but a capital insured for his future operations. His plan was to obtain a poem from each of the distinguished bards of this era so prolific of poetry, and publish them in a handsome volume. That these contributions would be readily given, he did not entertain a single doubt; and that such a collection would obtain a profitable sale, he was equally certain. In this case, he measured men, as usual, by his own standard, and judged them to be as liberal as himself. He accordingly applied personally or by letter to Southey, Wilson, Wordsworth, Lloyd, Morehead, Pringle, Paterson, and several others, all of whom sent him contributions, though Wordsworth afterwards reclaimed his; Lord Byron and Rogers also promised to write for the volume, but sent nothing. Byron at that time was writing "Lara," which he had destined for the Shepherd's collection, but was afterwards induced to change his purpose. It was on Sir Walter Scott, however, that the Shepherd chiefly relied, of whom he had never asked anything in vain; but when he applied to him for a poem, he was met by a decisive refusal. It was in vain that Hogg expostulated; Sir Walter stood firm, and the other retired in a towering rage. As the success of his project mainly depended upon the expected contribution from Scott, and as he was conscious that he would himself have given ten times as much for a friend, the disappointment preyed upon him so keenly that he sent Sir Walter a very abusive letter, which commenced in a style of fierce defiance, and ended with, "Yours with disgust." An estrangement commenced, on the part of Hogg at least, which continued for several months, and threatened to last for life. "I could not even endure," he says, "to see him at a distance, I felt so degraded by the refusal; and I was at that time more disgusted with all mankind than I had ever been before, or have ever been since."

This wrath, however, would not further the progress of his intended publication, and with a heavy heart Hogg began to examine the stock he had in hand. But the poems would not suit his purpose. They were indeed of considerable merit, as how could they have been otherwise, written by such authors? but they seem, after all, like other such charitable contributions, to have been the dregs of the ink-bottle, or sweepings of the study, sent in at the last moment, and to implement a thoughtless promise. While he reviewed them with a despondent eye, and convinced himself of their inferiority, a bright idea occurred to the Shepherd:—it was, that he could himself write a better poem than any that had been sent, or was still likely to be sent to him. Why, then, not produce, with his own pen, a superior collection in the manner of each writer, instead of this dull *omnegatherum?* Under a bolder inspiration than that of the schoolmaster when he exclaimed, "I will enact three worthies myself!" Hogg commenced the task. He had announced a collection of poems to be written by the chief of our living bards; and here was an imitation rising under his hand which the world would mistake for the reality. He must have chuckled, as he shifted the current of the song, until he had repeated the echoes of the whole tuneful choir, and completed the concert behind the curtain in his own single person. With the exception of a small portion, the whole was written in three weeks, and in less than as many months after was published, under the title of "The Poetic Mirror, or Living Bards of Britain." It mystified the public, but only for a moment, and even when detection followed, the disappointment was changed into a laugh, and the "Poetic Mirror" proclaimed a clever and capital joke. So excellent indeed in many cases were the imitations, that the delusion might have lasted longer, but for the broad farce and caricature which every now and then escaped from them, like Hogg's own loud *guffaw*. The "Mirror," it is true, was not so successful as the similar work by the Smiths, called the "Rejected Addresses," although the poetry of the former is greatly superior to that of the latter; but this may have been owing to the fact that the Addresses were caricatures from beginning to end, and as such were received by the public at their first outset. Hogg, on the contrary, had raised expectations which the gravity of his commencement had not tended to undeceive.

It must have been about this time that the Ettrick Shepherd became a member of the Right and Wrong Club. The present was still a transition period of Scottish society, in which much of the wildness and irregularity of the latter part of the eighteenth century continued to linger; even the embers of the Hell-fire Club were not yet wholly extinguished; and *symposia* were frequent among literary characters and men of mark, which only forty years after would have been eschewed by the common people as disreputable. It was not therefore surprising that the social unsuspecting disposition of the Shepherd should involve him in some one of these vortices, and that for a season he should be whirled about in its giddy revolutions. This Right and Wrong Club was established one evening at dinner, among some choice spirits, tainted with the leaven of the old school, with their entertainer, a young lawyer, afterwards a distinguished barrister, at their head; and their principle of association was, that whatever any of its members should assert, was to be supported by the whole fraternity, whether *right* or *wrong*. The idea was so delightful, that they met next day at Oman's hotel, to celebrate the formation of the

club; they dined at five o'clock, and separated at two in the morning; and such was the hilarity which had prevailed among these mad revellers, most of them men of scholarship and genius, as well as bacchanals, that they agreed to have a daily meeting of the same kind. It is needless to add that such a paroxysm could not be lasting; and during five or six weeks over which these quotidian meetings extended, some of the members drank themselves into derangement, while others rushed headlong into engagements that ended in marriage. As for Hogg, whose head needed little stimulus beyond the poetry that was in it, he was soon laid up by an inflammatory fever, which was not abated by their sympathetic visits, often made at two or three o'clock in the morning, after their meeting had dissolved, and when they were in such a hazy or mischievous condition, that they generally broke all the knockers and bell-handles in the stair, amidst their search for the right door. Finding that in spite of their attentions their poet-laureate did not recover, the Right and Wrong Club held a consultation upon the subject; and as their deliberation was probably at an early hour of the evening, they wisely resolved to discontinue their meetings until he joined them, and should that never happen, never to meet again. By this resolution, to which they stoutly adhered, the club was broken up. It was probably the last monstrosity of the kind by which the past history of Edinburgh is disfigured.

This severe attack of illness, by which the Shepherd was confined three weeks to bed, had almost proved fatal, and was only surmounted by the strength of his constitution and the care of a skilful physician. In the meantime, Sir Walter Scott had heard of his illness; and although all intercourse between them had ceased, he never failed to call every day at Messrs. Grieve and Scott's, to inquire for the patient, on his return from his official duties at Parliament-house. Nor were these mere calls of ceremony, for one day, taking Mr. Grieve aside, he asked him if Hogg had proper attendants and good medical advice? Mr. Grieve assured him that he had both, and that in the doctor the patient had implicit confidence. "I would fain have called upon him," rejoined Sir Walter, "but I knew not how I would be received. I request, however, that he may have every proper attendance, and want for nothing that can contribute to the restoration of his health. And in particular, I have to request that you will let no pecuniary consideration whatever prevent his having the best medical advice in Edinburgh, for I shall see it paid. Poor Hogg! I would not for all that I am worth in the world that anything serious should befall him." Mr. Grieve, as desired, kept the secret, so that it was not till some time afterwards that the Shepherd by accident got information of this interview. He was struck with the kindness of Sir Walter, and afflicted with the thought that he had quarrelled with such a friend, so that he could not rest until he had attempted a reconciliation. The result of this penitent and relenting feeling was the following characteristic letter:—

"To Walter Scott, Esq., Castle Street.

"Gabriels Road, *February* 28, 1815.

"Mr. Scott,—I think it is great nonsense for two men who are friends at heart, and who ever must be so—indeed it is not in the nature of things that they can be otherwise—should be professed enemies.

"Mr. Grieve and Mr. Laidlaw, who were very severe on me, and to whom I was obliged to show your letter, have long ago convinced me that I mistook part of it, and that it was not me you held in such contempt, but the opinion of the public. The idea that you might mean that (though I still think the reading will bear either construction), has given me much pain; for I knew I answered yours intemperately, and in a mortal rage. I meant to have inclosed yours, and begged of you to return mine, but I cannot find it, and am sure that some one to whom I have been induced to show it has taken it away. However, as my troubles on that subject were never like to wear to an end, I could no longer resist telling you that I am extremely vexed about it. I desire not a renewal of our former intimacy, for haply, after what I have written, your family would not suffer it; but I wish it to be understood that, when we meet *by chance*, we might shake hands, and speak to one another as old acquaintances, and likewise that we may exchange a letter occasionally, for I find there are many things which I yearn to communicate to you, and the tears rush to my eyes when I consider that I may not.

"If you allow of this, pray let me know; and if you do not, let me know. Indeed, I am anxious to hear from you, for 'as the day of trouble is with me, so shall my strength be.' To be friends *from the teeth forwards* is common enough; but it strikes me that there is something still more ludicrous in the reverse of the picture, and so to be enemies:—and why should I be, *from the teeth forwards*, yours sincerely,

"James Hogg?"

This curious epistle, so indicative of pride struggling with shame in confessing a fault and craving forgiveness, was rightly estimated; and Scott, instead of parading a lecture in return, answered by a short note, desiring him to think no more about the matter, and come to breakfast next morning. The pair, so strangely dissimilar, and yet in many

points so like, were united once more, and perhaps their renewed friendship was all the stronger for the interruption. But still, though desired to think no more about it, Hogg could not rest without an explanation of the quarrel, and on the day of that morning, he introduced it, while they walked round St. Andrew's Square; but Scott parried the subject. The attempt was renewed by the Shepherd a few days after, in Sir Walter's study; but the latter again eluded it with such dexterity, that Hogg was left in the dark as before, and obliged to conjecture what could be the cause of the other's peremptory refusal of a contribution to the "Poetic Mirror." This guess, however, did full honour to the character of Scott. "I knew him too well," he says, "to have the least suspicion that there could be any selfish or unfriendly feeling in the determination which he adopted, and I can account for it in no other way, than by supposing that he thought it mean in me to attempt either to acquire gain, or a name, by the efforts of other men; and that it was much more honourable, to use a proverb of his own, 'that every herring should hang by its own head.'"

Apropos of the Shepherd's quarrels with literary men, he had another with a person almost as highly distinguished as Scott, and whose mode of backing out of it was equally characteristic. The notice, which is a brief one, is best given in Hogg's own words. "Mr. Wilson once drove me also into an ungovernable rage, by turning a long and elaborate poem of mine, on 'The Field of Waterloo,' into ridicule, on learning which, I sent him a letter, which I thought was a tickler. There was scarcely an abusive epithet in our language that I did not call him by. My letter, however, had not the desired effect: the opprobrious names proved only a source of amusement to Wilson, and he sent me a letter of explanation and apology, which knit my heart closer to him than ever." Those who knew the late John Wilson, or those who have only read the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*—and who has not?—can easily imagine the uproarious character of his mirth when this letter was received, the running commentary with which he must have ornamented it, and the spirit of half-fun, half-earnest, with which he penned his eloquent answer proving to the simple Shepherd's full conviction that the ground of quarrel was a mere misconception.

During this year (1815) the poetical talents of Hogg were kept in active exercise, but still apparently under their old fatality. A celebrated musical composer being engaged by a certain company in London to supply suitable verses for some ancient Hebrew melodies selected in the synagogues of Germany, applied to our poet for original verses applicable to the music, and these Hogg engaged to furnish at the rate of a guinea a stanza. For such a task his knowledge of music and love of sacred song were well adapted; and having furnished appropriate verses for all the melodies, the work was brought out in splendid style, as a one guinea volume. But if it was a profitable speculation to the proprietors, it was not so to the poet, as he never got a farthing for his pains. During the same year he published two volumes of tragedies, under the title of "Dramatic Tales, by the author of the 'Poetic Mirror.'" As we have formerly seen, he had attempted to write for the stage, but had not got his production so far advanced as the door of the green-room, and the present attempt to win distinction as a dramatic writer through the press was equally unsuccessful. On this account, his "Sir Anthony Moore," "All-Hallow Eve," "The Profligate Princess," and "The Haunted Glen," contained in these two volumes, are scarcely known even by name. He was to find, like many other disappointed bards, that poetry, although of the highest excellence, is insufficient to constitute a good play; and that the chief requisite is a striking story skilfully told to the eye, instead of well-measured lines, lofty metaphors, and eloquent moral soliloquies. Such has been the prevalent taste, at least since the commencement of the present century, under which, tragedies, if brought upon the stage, although equal to Home's "Douglas" or Addison's "Cato," would be certain of a fate which we care not to name.

Amidst these untoward adventures in literature, the time had arrived when the Shepherd was to take possession of his little farm of Altrive Lake. Being in a district so associated with his early career, and among occupations so suited to his tastes and habits, and holding his farm as a sort of independent lairdship for life, it seemed to open to him like a welcoming haven, after a long weary voyage of storms and vicissitudes. As he had now also reached the age of forty-five, he had attained the period when mere love of excitement, and of stirring enterprise for its own sake, subsides into peaceful domestic habits and steady useful industry. And how delightfully he might alternate the labours of the field with the occupations of a peaceful study, where he could have subjects of his own choosing, and his own time and mode of discussing them, independent alike of publishers, booksellers, and reviewers! But one little transaction yet remained before he could be done with publishers for ever. It was necessary to stock his farm, and there was only one capital on which he could draw for the purpose. The idea occurred to his friends, and especially to Mr. Blackwood [Ebony], that the object could be attained by a new edition of the "Queen's Wake," brought out in a splendid style, and with suitable decorations, at a guinea each copy; and accordingly, the fifth edi-

ALTRIVE

THE RESIDENCE OF THE FETTRICK SHEPHERD

EDINBURGH

tion, in royal octavo, with plates, was published, while the sale was promoted by Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Charles Sharpe, Mr. Blackwood, Mr. David Bridges, junr., and other influential gentlemen. The sentiments of Sir Walter upon this plan, and his short account of the past life and present prospects of the Ettrick Shepherd, are thus given in a letter to Lord Montagu, brother of the Duke of Buccleuch:—

"Abbotsford, *June* 8, 1817.

"My dear Lord,—I am honoured with your letter, and will not fail to take care that the Shepherd profits by your kind intentions and those of Lady Montagu. This is a scheme which I did not devise, for I fear it will end in disappointment, but for which I have done, and will do, all I possibly can. There is an old saying of the seamen's, 'every man is not born to be a boatswain,' and I think I have heard of men born under a sixpenny planet, and doomed never to be worth a groat. I fear something of this vile sixpenny influence had gleamed in at the cottage window when poor Hogg first came squeaking into the world. All that he made by his original book he ventured on a flock of sheep, to drive into the Highlands, to a farm he had taken there, but of which he could not get possession, so that all the stock was ruined and sold to disadvantage. Then he tried another farm, which proved too dear, so that he fairly broke upon it. Then put forth divers publications, which had little sale, and brought him accordingly few pence, though some praise. Then came this "Queen's Wake," by which, he might and ought to have made from £100 to £200 for there were, I think, three editions—when lo! his bookseller turned bankrupt, and paid him never a penny. The duke has now, with his wonted generosity, given him a cosie bield, and the object of the present attack upon the public, is to get, if possible, as much cash together as will stock it. But no one has loose guineas now to give poor poets, and I greatly doubt the scheme succeeding, unless it is more strongly patronized than can almost be expected. In bookselling matters, an author must either be the conjuror who commands the devil, or the witch who serves him—and few are they whose situation is sufficiently independent to enable them to assume the higher character; and this is injurious to the indigent author in every respect, for not only is he obliged to turn his pen to every various kind of composition, and so to injure himself with the public by writing hastily, and on subjects unfitted for his genius; but moreover, these honest gentlemen, the booksellers, from a natural association, consider the books as of least value, which they find they can get at least expense of copy-money, and therefore are proportionally careless in pushing the sale of the work. Whereas, a good round sum out of their purse, like a moderate rise of rent on a farm, raises the work thus acquired in their own eyes, and serves as a spur to make them clear away every channel, by which they can discharge their quires upon the public. So much for bookselling, the most ticklish, and unsafe, and hazardous of all professions, scarcely with the exception of horse-jockeyship."

The work appeared in due time, illustrated with all the embellishments of the press, and dedicated to Britain's hope, the soon to be lamented Princess Charlotte. Of the success of this new edition of the "Queen's Wake" as a mercantile speculation we have no distinct account; and from this silence it is probable that it proved a failure, or at least that the profits were slow in coming. But in the meantime the poet was snugly located in a humble but independent home at his Altrive farm. His habitation was the cottage of the former tenant, and consisted of only two principal apartments, a *but* and a *ben*, one of which was the kitchen, while the other served both for parlour and bedroom. The surrounding country was more picturesque than fertile, and contained a somewhat scanty population; but to make amends for these drawbacks, there were no toll-bars to interrupt the sentimental meditations of the tourist in carriage or on horseback by a sordid demand upon his purse—nor milestones, to measure out his enjoyment like a bale of cloth over the counter, for which he was to pay so much per yard. There were not even rural hostels where the traveller might halt for refreshment; but at every cottage he could get a hospitable welcome, and such fare as it contained, and be quit of the obligation, by telling the news of the day. If he was dainty and curious in his search after creature comforts, he could find milk and honey, and trout and lamb; and if he asked any maiden whom he met for a draught of water, he received one of milk instead. The inhabitants were also true children of the soil, whose individual existence was identified with the scenery around them; and of every rock or stream the shepherds could tell the story with which it might be connected, from the days of Robert Bruce to those of Peden and the Covenant. In a land and among a people so congenial to his own heart, why did not Hogg renounce cities for ever, and resume that pastoral life to which his affectionate remembrances had never ceased to cling? But he had committed himself to a life of literature until it was too late to begin life anew. He had also acquired an amount of fame as an author which many would have given life itself to purchase; and the desire to increase or even to maintain it, was to him of greater importance than the rearing of sheep and the bargainings of the cattle-market. Independently also of his confirmed intellectual habits, the

pressure of circumstances from without frequently compelled him to have recourse to his pen, and become a sojourner at Edinburgh, when his wishes would have detained him at Altrive. In this manner his time continued to be divided between the town and the country, and his rural occupations to be mixed with the composition of songs, tales, and novels, and the correction of proof-sheets. But would it have been desirable that the Scottish Theocritus, who had charmed the world with his lays, should have thrown his harp into St. Mary's Loch, because it interfered with the profits of his beeves and muttons? Those censorious judges who blamed him because he did not become wholly a sheep-farmer, would probably have been the loudest in their outcry against him had he adopted such a course. Be it remembered, also, that society itself had deprived poor Hogg of the power of choice; for even when he retired from the world, the world went in chase of him, and hunted him out. He was not only a literary celebrity, but a literary marvel; and many who had been charmed with the beauty of the "Queen's Wake," were impatient to see with their own bodily eyes the veritable shepherd by whom it had been written. As soon, therefore, as he had ceased to be a wandering myth, by becoming stationary at Altrive, tourists from far and near, in chariots or on foot, repaired to his cottage, in many cases for the purpose of aggrandizing their own littleness, by boasting of their personal acquaintanceship with such a poet, and retailing his sayings and conversations. And for all these intruders, the warm guileless heart of the Shepherd had a welcome, even although they engrossed his time, and made attention to his daily pursuits impossible.

Among the more important and agreeable of these visits, was one from David Wilkie. This eminent artist was now at the height of his fame as a delineator of rural Scottish life; and after a long absence from Scotland, he returned to it in 1817, where he was enthusiastically welcomed by his countrymen, who were proud of his talents and the national spirit that had animated his pencil. After a sojourn of some days at Abbotsford with Sir Walter Scott, Wilkie being desirous of seeing the author of the "Queen's Wake," travelled through the picturesque valleys of Ettrick toward the poet's cottage, with William Laidlaw for his guide. Their arrival was at a propitious time, for Hogg was in high glee in consequence of a flattering letter from Blackwood the publisher, to whom he had sent the famous "Chaldee Manuscript." He received the visitors in his kitchen, which was the choicest part of the house, but better furnished than such places usually are; and as it was early in the forenoon, he bestirred himself to prepare for them a good substantial breakfast. The kettle was hung over a clear peat fire, and soon began to simmer; Hogg explored, and emptied the best of his larder, and sent his servant maid, a shepherdess, to borrow some loaf bread, to which she added a supply of the never-failing oatmeal cakes. While he was thus bustling about, he heard Laidlaw and the stranger talking about scenery, cottages, and the picturesque, at which he started, and turning to his old friend, exclaimed with an eager look, "This is no the *great* Mr. Wilkie?" "It's juist the great Mr. Wilkie, Hogg," replied Laidlaw. The artist's hand was immediately in the Shepherd's grasp, who at the same time cried, with eyes that gleamed with delight, "Mr. Wilkie, I cannot tell how proud I am to see you in my house—and how glad I am to see you are so young a man!" Never had the artist, though mingling with the highest society, received such a flattering and yet delicate commendation. The breakfast that followed was such as would have delighted an epicure tourist after a morning's journey among mountain scenery, its chief articles consisting of rizzar'd trouts from the Yarrow, and a fry of parrs, a peculiarly delicious kind of fish from Douglas Burn. When Laidlaw afterwards gave an account to Sir Walter Scott of the words with which Hogg welcomed the artist, Scott was so struck with them, that he exclaimed, "The fellow! it was the finest compliment ever paid to man!"

From a passing notice in the foregoing incident, it will be seen that the Shepherd had already become identified with *Blackwood's Magazine*; and as his connection with that celebrated periodical was an important event in his literary life, some detail of the circumstances which connected him with the birth of *Maga*, and its early history, may here be briefly stated. From his practice as editor of the *Spy* Hogg had naturally acquired a love of that discursive and miscellaneous sort of writing: it gave a more ample swing to the impulses of the moment, and could be better prosecuted by fits and starts, than the all-day and every-day task of months or years; and committed as he felt himself to authorship as a profession, both his temperament and his habits were more at home in dashing off an article at a heat, than enduring the bondage and study of a long-continued work whether in prose or poetry. It will be judged, also, from his sanguine disposition, that he was little apt to be daunted by failure, and therefore the extinction of the *Spy*, instead of deterring, only braced him for a fresh attempt. He would try again, and he would be luckier next time. He discussed with his literary friends the project of a new magazine that should supersede the worn-out periodicals of the day; and in Mr. Thomas Pringle, who had contemplated a similar adventure, he found an able coadjutor. When their plan was matured, Hogg mentioned it

to Mr. Blackwood, and was delighted to find that this enterprising publisher had been long contemplating a similar design. A monthly magazine conducted with the learning, talent, and spirit of the *Edinburgh Review* was now the great literary *desideratum*, and could not fail, if rightly managed, to be more popular than the long-delayed ponderous quarterlies. Under these circumstances the first number of *Blackwood's Magazine* appeared in April, 1817, and our Shepherd, from having first started the proposal, considered himself "the beginner and almost sole instigator of that celebrated work."

Scarcely had this periodical commenced its existence, when those fierce literary brawls began, by which its subsequent career was distinguished. Pringle and his friend Cleghorn, by whom it was conducted, having quarrelled with Mr. Blackwood, retired from the work, and went over, with several of their contributors, to Mr. Constable, who was endeavouring to resuscitate the *Scots Magazine*, as a rival to that of the other publisher; a regular pen-warfare commenced beween the supporters of the periodicals; and the fight was so keen, and so full of intellectual excitement, that the public at large watched its changes with interest, and added their halloo to the uproar. But there were young fierce Titans mustered under the Blackwood banner, and in a conflict where Wilson and Lockhart fought side by side, the fate of the Constable party could not long be doubtful. Amidst this brain-stirring logomachy, Hogg, although quietly ensconced in his cottage at Altrive, was no cold neutral. Having friends in both parties, he was at a loss with which of them to side; but remembering the disinterested kindness of Blackwood, and believing that he had been unfairly dealt with, he came in to the rescue with what afterwards proved to be the sharpest weapon of the controversy. The following is his own account of the matter: "I know not what wicked genius put it into my head, but it was then, in an evil hour, when I had determined on the side I was to espouse, that I wrote the "Chaldee Manuscript," and transmitted it to Mr. Blackwood from Yarrow. On first reading it, he never thought of publishing it; but some of the rascals to whom he showed it, after laughing at it, by their own accounts till they were sick, persuaded him, nay almost forced him, to insert it; for some of them went so far as to tell him, that if he did not admit that inimitable article, they would never speak to him again so long as they lived. Needless however it is now to deny, that they interlarded it with a good deal of deevilry of their own, which I had never thought of." These copious additions not only sharpened the sting, but aggravated the profanity of this singular production. Hogg acknowledges the authorship of the first two chapters, part of the third and part of the last, while the rest was supposed to have been made up by the chief contributors of *Blackwood* in full divan, with Lockhart at their head.

Little did the Shepherd imagine, when he sent this snow-ball rolling down hill, into what fearful dimensions it would grow in its descent, and how it would burst like an avalanche into the enemy's camp. "I declare," he adds, "I never once dreamed of giving anybody offence by that droll article, nor did I ever think of keeping it a secret either from Mr. Constable or Mr. Pringle: so far from that, I am sure, had I been in town, I would have shown the manuscript to the latter before publication. I meant it as a sly history of the transaction, and the great literary battle that was to be fought. All that I expected was a little retaliation of the same kind in the opposing magazine; and when I received letter after letter, informing me what a dreadful flame it had raised in Edinburgh, I could not be brought to believe that it was not a joke. I am not certain but that I confessed the matter to Mr. George Thomson, in the course of our correspondence, before I was aware of its importance. No one ever suspected me as the author. When I came to town, every one made his remarks, and pronounced his anathemas upon it, without any reserve, in my hearing, which afforded me much amusement. Still I could not help viewing the whole as a farce, or something unreal and deceptive; and I am sure I never laughed so much in my life as at the rage in which I found so many people." The publication of the "Chaldee Manuscript," however, was no laughing matter, and it recoiled upon all the parties concerned with a not unmerited retribution. From its close imitation of the language of Scripture, and application of ideas the most sacred to a scuffle between two booksellers and their adherents, not only the religious portion of the community was shocked, but even the thoughtless and indifferent, after their laugh had ended, felt that the joke had been carried too far. The moral character of the young magazine was damaged, and its success almost ruined at the outset. Blackwood himself, although he made a hasty atonement, by expunging the obnoxious article from the subsequent issues of the number, lost caste with the religious community to which he belonged, and narrowly escaped the penalty of church excommunication. Finally Hogg, as being the head and front of the offending, came in for the greatest share of the punishment, and in his case too it was strictly in accordance with poetical justice. Having parodied the Scriptures, he was himself parodied in turn. Articles bearing his name, and with absurd imitations of his sentiments and style, were from time to time introduced into *Blackwood's Magazine*, by

which his self-love was wounded, his peace embittered, and his talents exposed to misconception and derision. Witty though the "Chaldee Manuscript" undoubtedly was, it would have been better for him that he had never written a line of it.

Having already published as much poetry as sufficed to occupy five good volumes, it was time that the poetical field of the Shepherd should lie fallow for a season. To this he was the more inclined from the failure of his dramas, which made him apprehend the same fate to whatever poetry he might produce. But his pen the while could not lie idle, and he knew that he could write stirring popular tales as well as good verses. He had also before him the example of the Great Unknown, who after reigning for years as the prince of poets, had now become the king of novelists. Accordingly during this same year (1817), he published the "Brownie of Bodsbeck and other Tales" in two volumes. In the preceding year Scott had published his novel of "Old Mortality," which had delineated the Scottish Covenanters in such an unfavourable light as awoke a keen religious controversy; and a tale written by the Ettrick Shepherd on the opposite side of the question was welcomed by the advocates of the "good old cause," as a counteractive to the formidable novel of the author of Waverley. But the world at large did not adopt so favourable a view of the case: on the contrary, it was alleged that the "Brownie" was but a humble copyist of "Old Mortality," and had followed the latter as the jackal does the lion, to glean up the plentiful scraps which the other had left behind him. Hogg was indignant at this suspicion, and in his autobiography declares it to be utterly groundless. This tale was written, he assures us, at an earlier period, and offered to Blackwood in 1816, so that had it been published at the time, it would have preceded the appearance of "Old Mortality." "This," he complacently observes, "would effectually have freed me from the stigma of being an imitator, and brought in the author of the 'Tales of My Landlord' as an imitator of me." The priority of "Old Mortality" was not the only annoyance which the author of the "Brownie of Bodsbeck" had to endure on this occasion. He had selected, as he tells us, the redoubtable Balfour of Burley as his hero, but was obliged to substitute for him John Brown of Caldwell, greatly to the detriment of the story. With the same desire to avoid the charge of imitation, he had endeavoured to extract Clavers from the tale, but found this impossible. With his earliest version of the Brownie, Hogg presented his "Bridal of Polmood," to be published as an accompaniment of the other, but this tale Blackwood rejected; and when Hogg supplied the other tales in its place, that of "The Woolgatherer" was like to be rejected also. The readers of Hogg's prose works will little sympathize with the judgment of the critic, whoever he might be, who demurred at the adoption of such an admirable sketch, and we can understand the indignation of its author on the subject, although his views are somewhat extreme. He thus gives his sentiments on the occasion, and comforts himself with the thought that he is in the right: "I would never object trusting a bookseller, were he a man of any taste; for unless he wishes to reject an author altogether, he can have no interest in asserting what he does not think. But the plague is, *they never read works themselves*, but give them to their minions, with whom there never fails to lurk a literary jealousy; and whose suggestions may uniformly be regarded as anything but the truth. For my own part, I know that I have always been looked on by the learned part of the community as an intruder in the paths of literature, and every opprobrium has been thrown on me from that quarter. The truth is, that I am so. The walks of learning are occupied by a powerful aristocracy, who deem that province their own peculiar right; else, what would avail all their dear-bought collegiate honours and degrees? No wonder that they should view an intruder, from the humble and despised ranks of the community, with a jealous and indignant eye, and impede his progress by every means in their power." Unfortunate, simple-hearted Shepherd! His whole life was a battle with careless publishers who could not appreciate his worth, and envious critics who laboured to decry it; while the indifferent success of his many productions, as compared with their obvious merits, gave some show of truth to his conclusions. But the remedy he proposes would throw all Paternoster Row into brain-fever or paralysis. What publisher could be such a universal genius as to analyze every MS. submitted to his acceptance, or so strong and patient as to undergo such a task? They will continue to confide in the judgment of the learned and critical, though the verdict must occasionally be a wrong one, and themselves the losers by adopting it.

The next literary task of Hogg was of an editorial and antiquarian character. What was called the tartan fever, which Sir Walter Scott had originated, and which royalty afterwards adopted and matured, was now in its first flush; and at a meeting of the Highland Society of London, the Duke of Sussex being in the chair, a proposal was made to collect the Jacobite songs of Scotland, and the traditions with which they were connected. Into this congenial undertaking the Shepherd gladly entered; and from his Jacobite sympathies, his taste and experience in the poetical department of song-making, and his acquaintanceship with the Highlands, it would have been difficult to find any one better

qualified to execute it. But his quest was not an easy one. The merciless massacres and executions that followed the battle of Culloden, as being the last great era in the uneventful history of the Highlands, were still as fresh as the doings of yesterday in the memory of the mountaineers; and when they found a Saxon among them collecting scraps of their rebellious proceedings, they were apt to regard him as a spy of government come to settle the balance of the old score, if such could be found against them. It was no wonder, therefore, if these simple people were shy at his advances, and chary of their communications. "I shall never forget," says Hogg, "with what sly and disdainful looks Donald would eye me, when I told him I was gathering up old songs. And then he would say, 'Ohon, man, you surely haif had very less to do at home! And so you want to get some of the songs of the poor repellioners from me—and then you will give me up to King Shorge to be hanged? Hoo, no!—that will never do.'" Indeed, had it not been for the influence of the ladies over the peasantry of their respective districts, the undertaking would have proved a failure. Nor was this the only difficulty he had to encounter, for even after the songs were collected, he was often at a loss about the historical annotations with which they behoved to be accompanied. The dilemmas into which he was often thrown while preparing the work for the press, may be surmised from the following extract of a letter from Sir Walter Scott to Lord Montagu, dated Edinburgh, 4th March, 1819:—"Hogg is here busy with his Jacobite songs. I wish he may get handsomely through, for he is profoundly ignorant of history, and it is an awkward thing to read in order that you may write. I give him all the help I can, but he sometimes poses me. For instance, he came yesterday, open mouth, inquiring what great dignified clergyman had distinguished himself at Killiecrankie—not exactly the scene where one would have expected a churchman to shine—and I found with some difficulty, that he had mistaken Major-general Canon, called, in Kennedy's Latin song, *Canonicus Gallovidiensis*, for the canon of a cathedral."

In spite of such impediments, the first volume of "The Jacobite Relics of Scotland" was published in 1819, and the second appeared in the following year. The nature of the songs themselves, and the political bearing of the critical and historical illustrations with which they were accompanied, were enough to secure the condemnation of the work in the Whig periodicals; and loudest in the cry was the *Edinburgh Review*, by which the attack was headed. But sheltered in his Toryism, the Shepherd endured the storm with the resignation of a martyr. His wonted self-complacency also came to his rescue, and he blandly declares in his autobiography, "I am sure I produced two volumes of Jacobite Relics, such as no man in Scotland or England could have produced but myself." His merriment was also unbounded at a blunder into which the Edinburgh reviewer had fallen, who, while condemning the whole collection, had excepted the song of "Donald M'Gillivry," on which he bestowed the highest commendation—a song of Hogg's own composition, which he had written the year before, and introduced anonymously among the "Relics." Scott, we are told, enjoyed the joke almost as heartily as the Shepherd himself.

As the publication of these Jacobite Relics was a patriotic labour of love, rather than a literary mercantile speculation, Hogg, during the interval between the first and second volumes, prepared his "Winter Evening Tales" for the press, which were published in 1820 in Edinburgh, by Messrs. Oliver and Boyd. That two closely-printed volumes should have been produced so speedily, and amidst the pressure of other work, would have been almost incredible, but for his own explanation. In this case he had drawn upon that huge collection of MSS. which he had accumulated during his years of leisure, and which he had often found so available in his public literary life. "The greater part of these tales," he informs us, "was written in early life, when I was a shepherd among the mountains, and on looking them over, I saw well enough that there was a blunt rusticity about them; but I liked them the better for it, and altered nothing. To me they appeared not only characteristic of the life that I then led, but also of the manners that I was describing." The vivid truthful pictures with which these Winter Tales abounded, the descriptions of a sphere of life which none could have given but one who had lived in it, and the terse vigorous language in which they were embodied, were universally recognized, and strongly commended. But, still, there was a demur and a drawback. Had not their writer been too truthful and too characteristic? Let us here listen to his own reply. "As to the indelicacies hinted at by some reviewers, I do declare that such a thought never entered into my mind, so that the public are indebted for these indelicacies to the acuteness of the discoverers. Woe be to that reader who goes over a simple and interesting tale fishing for indelicacies, without calculating on what is natural for the characters with whom he is conversing; a practice, however, too common among people of the present age, especially if the author be not a blue-stocking. All that I can say for myself in general, is, that I am certain I never intentionally meant ill, and that I hope to be forgiven both by God and man, for every line that I have written injurious to the cause of religion, of virtue, or of good manners. On the other hand, I am so ignorant of the world, that it can scarcely be expected I should

steer clear of all inadvertencies." Such is the Shepherd's apology; and although it may not be thought to remove the offence, it is sufficient to absolve him of the design to offend. And after all, what is the amount of the offending?—A few coarse or profane words, in keeping with those who uttered them, and which when culled from all his writings would scarcely amount to a dozen of printed lines. It would be hard indeed if the works of the Ettrick Shepherd should be inadmissible into families, through a fault in which every contemporary author was as culpable as himself. In the present edition we have permitted these obnoxious words *to retire;* and this the more that their presence was scarcely necessary, while their absence will be unfelt.

The year 1820 constituted an important epoch in the life of James Hogg. Since 1813, when the "Queen's Wake" was produced, he had signalized his industry by the production of fifteen volumes. His name was now a household word not only in the lordly mansion but the peasant's hut; and while regarded by the learned and the great as one of the true aristocracy of genius, he was contemplated with love and veneration by his old rustic associates, who, while they wondered at his career, were proud of him as the ornament of their own class, and the vindicator of their claims to the rights of men and citizens. And as yet, though he numbered years not a few, his step was as strong and his spirit as buoyant as ever; the world still lay before him, and only half of his career was ended. He had also built for himself a handsome cottage upon his farm; while his aged parents, whom he had supported to the last, had passed away in a ripe old age, rejoicing in the fame and success of their son. In such a situation his next step was obvious: it was to become a husband. In 1820 he married Miss Margaret Phillips, youngest daughter of Mr. Phillips of Langbridge-moor in Annandale. No choice which he ever made was so wise, and at the same time so fortunate.

Having thus obtained a partner of a rank superior to his own original condition, the Shepherd's old ambition for farming revived in a greater degree than ever. He had now a more respectable position to maintain, as well as one more stable than he could secure by authorship; while his farm of Altrive Lake, although so cheaply held, consisted of little more than seventy acres, most of them unproductive. He resolved to rent a larger farm, and with this view began to call in the debts due, or that soon would be due to him, from his various publishers, to the amount of a thousand pounds, to which was added the expectation of an equal amount from his father-in-law, as his wife's portion. He now signified his wishes to Lord Montagu, the head trustee of the estates of the Duke of Buccleuch, and was offered the farm of Mount-Benger, which adjoined that of Lake Altrive. Notwithstanding the readiness of the offer it did not suit his wishes, as the place, during the six preceding years, had ruined two skilful agriculturists who had successively farmed it. His prudent misgivings were in this case overruled by his unwise advisers, who represented to him that no tenants on the Buccleuch estates were ever allowed to be great losers; and that even if he could not make the rent by farming, he could do it by writing. He allowed himself to be persuaded, and took a lease of Mount-Benger for nine years.

He now commenced farming on a large scale with a thousand pounds of capital, his literary debts having been promptly paid; but scarcely had he commenced, than his ill luck resumed its ascendency. The farm required a stocking of one thousand sheep at a time when they cost thirty shillings a head. Then, it required twenty cows, five horses, with farming utensils of all sorts, crop, manure, draining, fencing, building—expenses that soon swallowed up his capital, as it would have done thrice the amount. To all this were added certain pecuniary embarrassments, which had unexpectedly befallen his father-in-law, by which his expectations in that quarter were disappointed. He had recourse to his pen, and during the next two years realized by his writings seven hundred and fifty pounds, besides smaller sums paid in cash; but the difficulties of the outset continued to cling to him, so that every struggle sunk him deeper in the mire. Such was the fate of his farming while the lease of Mount-Benger lasted; and when it expired, live stock had declined one half in value, and he was left without sixpence in the world. This impoverished condition was not new to him: on the contrary, it had been the usual result of every previous attempt to win prosperity and secure it; but he had now a young family depending upon him, and at the age of threescore it was too late to begin life anew. "Altogether I find," he says, "I lost upwards of two thousand pounds on Mount-Benger lease—a respectable sum for an old shepherd to throw away." It was well for him that in a "sea of troubles" he was never without his cork-jacket. Let him be sunk down as often as he might, his natural buoyancy always brought him to the surface. His own testimony on the subject is worthy of attention. He tells us in his Autobiography, "It will be consolatory to my friends to be assured that none of these reverses ever preyed in the smallest degree on my spirits. As long as I did all for the best, and was conscious that no man could ever accuse me of dishonesty, I laughed at the futility of my own calculations, and let my earnings go as they came, amid contentment and happiness, determined to make more money as soon as possible, although it should go the same way.

One may think," he adds, "on reading over this memoir, that I must have worn out a life of misery and wretchedness; but the case has been quite the reverse. I never knew either man or woman who has been so uniformly happy as I have been; which has been partly owing to a good constitution, and partly from the conviction that a heavenly gift, conferring the powers of immortal song, was inherent in my soul. Indeed, so uniformly smooth and happy has my married life been, that on a retrospect I cannot distinguish one part from another, save by some remarkably good days of fishing, shooting, and curling on the ice." We are not to conclude from this statement that he could not feel the sufferings of life acutely, and resent its wrongs indignantly: his poetical temperament was a proof of the former, while his fierce quarrels with his publishers were a sufficient guarantee of the latter. But he was inaccessible alike to lasting sorrows and lasting resentments. With him they were the April shower or the passing thunder-cloud, that interrupted the scene only for a few moments, and to be succeeded by a happier tranquillity and brighter sunshine. Such was his day of life to the close. When the clouds passed by they were gone for ever, for his eye was fixed upon the advancing brightness. The sullen discontent of misanthropy he could not understand, and even the apprehensions of worldly wisdom he regarded with dislike. Had it been otherwise he might have secured the goods of fortune; but would he have been happier by the exchange?

Having thus touched briefly upon the failure of his farming speculations at Mount-Benger, we go back to what is of more account—the literary life of the Ettrick Shepherd. He was soon indeed made aware that his pen must be his chief support as well as best consolation; and so also were his friends, who accordingly were on the alert either to find him a popular topic or a profitable purchaser. This was especially the case with Sir Walter Scott, now at the height of his good fortune, and who was anxious that Hogg should profit by his example. His plan for the occasion was connected—of all things in the world—with courts, and kings, and coronations, into which, one would think, the Shepherd could not well have been introduced except with cap and bells. The great national pageantry of crowning George IV. was announced for the 19th of July; and Sir Walter, who was going to be a spectator of the scene, resolved to take Hogg along with him, in the hope that he might produce some coronation poem or pamphlet on the occasion that would procure him a post or a pension. Here it is perhaps best to state Sir Walter's views in his own language, contained in a letter written at this time to Lord Montagu:—

"But now comes the news of news. I have been instigating the great Caledonian Boar, James Hogg, to undertake a similar trip—with the view of turning an honest penny to help out his stocking, by writing some sort of Shepherd's Letters, or the like, to put the honest Scots bodies up to this whole affair. I am trying with Lord Sidmouth to get him a place among the newspaper gentry to see the ceremony. It is seriously worth while to get such a popular view of the whole as he will probably hit off. I have another view for this poor fellow. You have heard of the Royal Literary Society, and how they propose to distribute solid pudding, *alias* pensions, to men of genius. It is, I think, a very problematical matter whether it will do the good which is intended; but if they do mean to select worthy objects of encouragement, I really know nobody that has a better or an equal claim to poor Hogg. Our friend Villiers takes a great charge of this matter, and good-naturedly forgave my stating to him a number of objections to the first concoction, which was to have been something resembling the French Academy. It has now been much modified. Perhaps there may be some means fallen upon, with your lordship's assistance, of placing Hogg under Mr. Villiers' view. I would have done so myself, but only I have battled the point against the whole establishment so keenly, that it would be too bad to bring forward a protegé of my own to take advantage of it. They intended at one time to give pensions of about £100 a year to thirty persons. I know not where they could find half-a-dozen with such pretensions as the Shepherd's. There will be risk of his being lost in London, or kidnapped by some of those ladies who open literary *menageries* for the reception of *lions*. I should like to see him at a rout of blue-stockings. I intend to recommend him to the protection of John Murray the bookseller; and I hope he will come equipped with plaid, kent, and colley."

In prosecution of this well-meant benevolent plan, Scott in applying to Lord Sidmouth for a place in Westminster Abbey to witness the coronation, requested one for Hogg also, who, he stated, was to be his companion; and his application was complied with, on condition that he and the Shepherd should dine the day after with his lordship at Richmond Park, where they should meet with the Duke of York, and a few other Jacobites who would be invited for the purpose. This was better still, and Sir Walter having thus succeeded in his arrangements, wrote to Hogg, requesting him to join him at Edinburgh, for the purpose of accompanying him to London—not doubting for a moment of the other's eager compliance. But to his astonishment, the offer was refused; and the cause assigned for the rejection only increased Sir Walter's wonderment. The honoured rustic wrote from Mount-Benger "with the tear in his eye," as he expressed it, declaring that if he went to London, he must miss attending the great

annual Border fair, held on St. Boswell's Green in Roxburghshire, on the 18th of every July; and that his absence from that meeting, so soon after entering upon business as a store-farmer, would be deemed imprudent and discreditable by his compeers. "In short," added the Shepherd, "the thing is impossible. But as there is no man in his majesty's dominions admires his great talents for government, and the energy and dignity of his administration, so much as I do, I will write something at home, and endeavour to give it you before you start." However the refusal might be wondered or laughed at, we cannot help thinking that Hogg was in the right. Amidst the blaze and trumpeting of a coronation, his imagination was more likely to be stunned than called into active exercise; and his expected Ode would perhaps have been no better than that of a court-laureate—the dullest and most artificial of all poetry. When Pegasus draws after him the annual butt of sack, he is nothing but a dray-horse. The Shepherd was as much at home amidst the companionship and business of St. Boswell's fair, as Sir Walter was among the royal pageantries of London, which he could turn to such good account. Nor was the former singular in his humble preference, as he was backed on this occasion by his old friend Allan Cunningham. Soon after the great event, Scott, when in London, stepped into Chantrey's studio, and thus hailed the talented stone-mason of Nithsdale: "Well, Allan, were you at the coronation? it was a splendid sight." "No, Sir Walter," said the other; "places were dear and ill to get: I am told it was a magnificent scene: but having seen the procession of King Crispin at Dumfries, I was satisfied." At this Sir Walter laughed heartily, and observed, "That's not a bit better than Hogg: he stood balancing the matter whether to go to the coronation or the fair of St. Boswell—and the fair carried it."

In the following year (1822), finding that he was likely to run short of money, the Shepherd betook himself to his literary resources, and in a few months produced a three-volume novel entitled "The Three Perils of Man, viz. War, Women, and Witchcraft." As it was written upon the spur of necessity, the materials, excellent in themselves, were incoherently brought together, and expressed in a loose rambling style, unlike the generality of his productions. "What a medley I made of it!" he says in one of his frank confessions—"for I never in my life re-wrote a page of prose [it would have been better for him had he done otherwise]; and being impatient to get hold of Messrs. Longman & Co.'s money or their bills, which were the same, I dashed on, and mixed up what might have been made one of the best historical tales our country ever produced [!!], with such a mass of diablerie as retarded the main story, and rendered the whole perfectly ludicrous." This tale condensed, with the diablerie thrown out, is given in the present collection under the title of "The Siege of Roxburgh." For his "Three Perils of Man," the author received £150, which probably only served to tide him over the difficulties of the day. During the same year, he also bargained with the firm of Constable and Co. for an edition of his best poems in four volumes, on the strength of which republication he received an advance of £200, while Sir Walter Scott accommodated him with a credit order for £100 to relieve him from his present embarrassments. It will thus be seen that had Mount-Benger been a better farm, or its tenant a better farmer, he might have become a thriving agriculturist. But as it was, nothing accrued from these sums except unproductive acres, and sheep that would not sell, with their natural reversion of useless labour, anxiety, and disappointment.

But it was not from bad harvests and unsaleable live stock, that the only annoyances of the Shepherd at this time originated, and his irritations in the capacity of author were fully equal to those he endured as a farmer. It was *Blackwood's Magazine*, of which he considered himself the chief originator, that was now the principal thorn in his side. The wags who obtained and kept possession of it, were as distinguished for mischief as for talent, and no person in public life who was distinguished for any peculiarity, whether bodily or mental, or who had been so unfortunate as to incur their dislike, could reckon himself safe from their aggressions. Their statements also were so plausible, that their grossest caricatures were accepted for veritable portraits; and the mystified public, while they welcomed its monthly appearances with a shout of laughter that pealed from Caithness to Canterbury, could not be persuaded that their merriment was unreasonable or misplaced. But it was not their enemies alone, but their friends also who occasionally came in for a share of their ungovernable fun, and of these, Hogg was so unfortunate as to obtain a double share. His rustic manners, that contrasted with his wonderful genius; the rude Doric of Ettrick, in which he expressed his thoughts, rich with profound reflection or poetical feeling; his undoubting, unquestioning credulity, so oddly at variance with his theoretical wisdom — these, and other such contradictions, marked him out to his unscrupulous allies as an exhaustless subject for their practice, while his kind-hearted placability, it was thought, would not easily be offended with their drolleries. To work therefore they set, and the Shepherd was soon astonished to find himself the author of songs he had never written, and extravagances he had never imagined, in the pages of *Blackwood*, so that amidst its strange and pungent fare, he was becoming the standing dish.

To counteract their designs, he resolved that in future his name or designation should be attached to every contribution he furnished; but as soon as they perceived this, they signed his name as fast as he did, and thus fathered upon him a brood of which he had no cause to be proud. It was in vain that he complained and remonstrated, for though amendment was promised, the injury continued unchecked. The following letter, half-angry, half-playful, which he wrote at the close of the previous year to Sir Walter Scott, will show what he felt on the subject:—

"Altrive Lake, *October* 3, 1821.

"My dear Sir Walter,—Like every other vassal, whose situation with his chief is perfectly understood, though never once mentioned, I always sit wisely still, unless either called upon by you to some great weapon-shaw, or when I find marauders and free-booters encroaching on my own privileges. In this last case I am never behind, viz. in asking indemnities, although in the former one (as in the late coronation affair), I sometimes show a little obstinacy to budge. I am fairly in Jamie Telfer's situation, and therefore I come lang eight miles bare-foot to Abbot's Ha' in hopes to have a rise in my favour. I allude to the beastly usage of me by Blackwood, and some new cronies of his. I know not what to do with that wretch. He will neither answer a letter, nor regard me one way or another; and though I have a written promise, dated nineteen months back, 'that my name should never be mentioned in this way without my own consent,' yet you see how it is kept, and how I am again misrepresented to the world. I am neither a drunkard, nor an idiot, nor a monster of nature, nor am I so imbecile as never to have written a word of grammar in my life. I would not mind their vulgar injurious ribaldry so much on my own account, but there are other feelings now that I am bound to regard above my own, where the wounds inflicted by such assassins rankle with so keen a smart, that I am unable to allay them, and this part of the business I cannot endure. I am assailed by letters from every quarter, urging me to do something in my own defence, which I am very willing to do if I wist what to do; but I am so apt to run wrong, that I dare not trust myself without asking your advice. Shall I answer him in print—pursue him at law (to which it will soon come if I answer him)—or knock out his brains? I must do something, for I am told there never was a man so ill-used in Britain; and truly I do not think there ever was. . . . . Will you suffer your liege yeoman to be guided this way, and advise him to take all patiently? You were angry at me the last time I went to law, and, as a small arle-penny, made me pay the piper damnably; and though I am burning for a mischief again, I shall not be free of entering on it this time without advice. Now, dear Sir Walter, though I have written this in bed for sheer amusement, I want a serious line from you what you think on the subject. I am lying sick of the measles, and not like to get readily free of the distemper, else I would have been down seeing Laidlaw, Lockhart, and yourself this week, which has for several years been the one I always paid my yearly homage. Yours ever most affectionately,

"James Hogg."

The answer of Sir Walter was the answer of a peace-maker. He advised his irritated friend to chastise these annoyances by silence and dignified contempt—and assured him that he would still be "James Hogg" in the eyes of his friends and the world at large, let his tormentors write what they pleased. After this, the annoyances of *Blackwood's Magazine* ceased for a time, but only to be renewed in the more talented and popular form of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. Of these singular productions, and the place which the Ettrick Shepherd is made to hold in them, it is unnecessary to speak, as they are in every one's hands. He felt, indeed, and acknowledged that such was the attractive nature of these sketches, that when the *Noctes* ceased, the popularity of the *Magazine* would expire; but he had no wish that he should be forced into such grotesque postures in the attempt to prop it, by having the chief weight thrown on his shoulders; and it said much in behalf of his old friendship for Wilson, that he endured the periodical infliction. But he had no such forbearance for the publisher, against whom, at a subsequent period, he enters the following protest: "For my part, after twenty years of feelings hardly suppressed, he has driven me beyond the bounds of human patience. That Magazine of his which owes its rise principally to myself, has often put words and sentiments into my mouth of which I have been greatly ashamed, and which have given much pain to my family and relations, and many of those after a solemn written promise that such freedoms should never be repeated. I have been often urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, I want but a hair to make a tether of."

Although the Shepherd's loyalty seemed to slumber in 1821, when he preferred St. Boswell's fair to the coronation, it was only that it might break out in full blaze upon the visit of George IV. to Scotland in 1822. The novelty of such an event united every class and party to welcome it, and during the brief time it lasted the national voice was nothing but a universal huzza. One of the most zealous to join in the acclamation was Hogg, and he did it in his own befitting fashion, by publishing a masque or

drama upon the occasion. "It was a theme," he says, "that suited me to a tittle, as I there suffered fancy to revel free. I got no money for it; but I got what I held in higher estimation, his majesty's thanks for that and my other loyal and national songs. The note is written by Sir Robert Peel, in his majesty's name, and I have preserved it as a relic." This cherished note, which was addressed to Sir Walter Scott, was as follows:—

"Melville Castle, Edinburgh,
"Thursday Morning, Six o'clock.

"My dear Sir Walter,—My last request to you is to beg you will return thanks to Mr. Hogg in the King's name for the gratifying proof of his genius and loyalty which you have enabled me to offer to his majesty. Adieu, and believe me sincerely yours, "Robert Peel.

"Sir Walter Scott, Bart."

The friends of Hogg might justly regret that his offering was thus requited with an empty compliment, when services so much inferior were so publicly acknowledged and bountifully rewarded. But not even the national exchequer would have sufficed to remunerate the excess of loyalty; and where so many were obliged to go away empty, the Shepherd's habitual ill luck was certain to place him among the unfortunates.

Being still in pecuniary difficulties, the unlucky tenant of Mount-Benger resumed the work of authorship, and in 1823 published "The Three Perils of Women," a novel in as many volumes. Like the "Three Perils of Man" it was hurriedly planned and as hastily written, so that amidst much verbiage and nonsense it revealed the author's talents in nothing but irregular fits and glimpses. Of this he was himself conscious after the deed was done, as appears by the following brief confession: "There is a good deal of pathos and absurdity in both the tales of this latter work; but I was all this while writing as if in desperation, and see matters now in a different light." It served however his immediate purpose, by bringing him £150 for the first edition of a thousand copies. This attempt he followed up in 1824 by "The Confessions of a Fanatic." It is indeed a wild and wondrous tale, in the fashion of the German school, and might have proceeded from the pen of Hoffman himself, whose extravagances it absolutely out-herods; but in excellence of plot, concentration of incident, and vigorous language, it may be considered one of the best and most interesting of Hogg's tales. But with all its excellence it was unacceptable to the public, and of course proved a failure. Its unlucky title, which originally was "The Confessions of a Justified Sinner" alarmed the religious portion of the community; and on glancing at the work, they hastily adopted the impression that the author, under the pretext of ridiculing fanaticism, and exposing the errors of ultra-orthodoxy, was assailing some of the chief doctrines of Christianity. Nothing could be more unfounded than such a suspicion, as a perusal of the tale itself will sufficiently show. But it was enough for the time to extinguish the "Confessions," and defeat the expectations of its author.

During a long period, the Scottish harp of the bard, which he had so worthily won at the Queen's Wake, had been almost wholly silent. But the carking cares of the world, by which he had been so long beset, are the caterpillars of poetry, and one and the same grasp is not likely to inclose a worrying bill for unpaid oxen, and a song breathing love, gladness, and tranquillity. He was also chagrined at the stinted rewards of his poetry, and compelled in self-defence to have recourse to the more marketable articles of prose. Before the failure of his dramatic attempts, he had planned a regular epic, and finished two books of it; but feeling as if nothing that he wrote in poetry could succeed, he had thrown the fragment aside. It was now resuscitated by the advice of some literary friends, and the whole epic was finished in a very short time under the title of "Queen Hynde." Having shown it to Sir Walter Scott, who commended it highly, as indeed he was wont to do in the case of far inferior productions, the work was published in 1826. Being a Scottish tale, it was best suited to the genius of the Ettrick Shepherd; and in consequence of the early period which he had chosen, it entered a fresh untrodden field, where the rich and the wonderful in poetry could range undisturbed. It was also addressed to the sex who are umpires of the prize of poetry as well as valour, and their sympathies were enlisted in its behalf by appeals sometimes mirthful, sometimes pathetic, which form the choicest portions of the whole composition. But "Queen Hynde" did not become popular. In spite of its gallant northern berserkars and their chivalrous deeds, its "fierce wars and faithful loves" which form the grand staple of an epic, and the sportive character of Wicked Wene, its chief heroine, whose tricks could set both saints and sinners by the ears, the ladies looked coldly on it, the critics condemned it, the publishers proclaimed it an unsaleable commodity. And yet both as a poem and a tale, it is full of beauty and full of interest, and those who read it in the present day will venture to reverse the judgment of their fathers who condemned it. As for the author, he did not find it difficult to persuade himself that his critics were at fault, and this conviction he expressed in the following amusing manner: "It is said the multitude never are wrong, but, in this instance, I must take Mr. Wordsworth's plan, and maintain

that they *were wrong*. I need not say how grievously I was disappointed, as what unsuccessful candidate for immortal fame is not? But it would have been well could I have refrained from exposing myself. I was invited to a public dinner given by a great number of young friends, a sort of worshippers of mine (for I have a number of those in Scotland). It was to congratulate me on my new work, and drink success to it. The president made a speech, in which, after some laudatory remarks on the new poem, he boldly and broadly asserted that it was much inferior to their beloved 'Queen's Wake.' I was indignantly wroth, denying his assertion both in principle and position, and maintained not only that it was infinitely superior to the 'Queen's Wake,' but I offered to bet the price of the edition with any or all of them that it was the best epic poem that ever had been produced in Scotland. None of them would take the bet, but as few backed me. I will however stake my credit on 'Queen Hynde.' It was unfortunate that the plot should have been laid in an age so early that we have no interest in it." But with all this high and even extravagant estimate of its merits, Hogg was compelled to feel that he had the whole world against him, and that it was time to quit the field. This he tells us in another part of his autobiography: "Having been so much discouraged by the failure of 'Queen Hynde,' I gave up all thought of ever writing another long poem, but continued for six years to write fairy tales, ghost stories, songs, and poems for periodicals of every description, sometimes receiving liberal payment, and sometimes none, just as the editor or proprietor felt disposed."

On the expiration of his lease of Mount-Benger, the Shepherd resumed his farm and cottage of Lake Altrive, which it would have been well for him that he had never quitted; and had he been an ordinary sheep-farmer, or had he been but left to himself, the means of comfort and independence with which he was still surrounded would have been sufficient for his simple wants. He sat as before rent-free; and although his little farm was barren enough, it could yield him a moderate livelihood. He could also find fish in the stream and game on the hills, and thus combine a comfortable well-stocked larder with healthful recreation and amusement. The picturesque water of Yarrow was only a bowshot distant; a burn well stored with trouts ran past his very door. His house though small was comfortably furnished, and in its principal apartment was to be seen the poet's library, a limited but choice collection, and some good pictures hanging on the wall, among which was an excellent portrait of one of his children—a likeness of his early dog Hector—and two of Martin's well-known engravings, one of them being the Fall of Nineveh. In the midst of this, let us group the hale active figure and cheerful expressive face of the Shepherd himself, seated in his arm-chair, and looking round him with a glance of happy enjoyment—his amiable partner of life, the *genius loci* of the establishment, under whose management the simple arrangements of the household were a picture of order and neatness, seated opposite—and their young children climbing the parental knee, or studiously spelling the lesson of the morrow—was not this a world complete in itself, and into which care should not have entered!

This allusion to the Shepherd's children may fitly introduce an important personage in his establishment. It was one who held the office of family tutor. Such an appendage, in the minds of our English readers at least, is usually confined to the mansions of the rich and noble, so that to them the idea of a farmer—and especially of a small farmer—possessing such an addition to his household might appear a token of assumption and downright extravagance. It is enough to inform them that in Scotland, where scholarship is prized more than houses and land, and where a good education stands foremost among the very necessaries of life, the outlying farms, which are too far removed from the village school, are often provided with such an important functionary; and that many a farm-house, in which a separate family nursery would be scouted as a luxury, is yet provided with its family schoolroom. And the tutor of such a humble establishment—he is no mere starveling, like the poor usher of an English country boarding-school, who is tied to the oar, because he hopes for nothing better and is fit for nothing else. Instead of this, he is generally some student in training for the ministry, and who has already passed such a portion of his university curriculum, as amply guarantees his fitness for the present office; while his accomplishments and future destination make him regarded by the whole family rather as an honoured guest, than a mere stipendiary. He uses his tutorship only as a necessary stepping-stone; and for his board, and a small salary of twelve or twenty pounds a year, is ready to teach not merely the ordinary branches of education, but the higher departments of Latin, Greek, and Mathematics. And could the establishment of Hogg be without its tutor? He had often lamented his own defective education, and spoken of what he might have been and done had his lot been otherwise; so that when he became a father, and found his children able to lisp, the preceptor was invoked, and the materials for teaching prepared. This was well; but a circumstance characteristic of the Shepherd's benevolent heart, gave a rich additional charm to the whole proceeding: he was resolved that the children of others should share in the benefits of his own. A building accordingly, in

the neighbourhood of his farm, sufficiently large for the purpose, was fitted up as a comfortable school, and to this not only the families of his farm-servants, but the children of the cottagers, had free access. Thus his generous care commenced, and only commenced at his own fireside; it went outward until it encircled the district around him, as it would have done the whole kingdom also had his means been but adequate to his wishes. It is pleasing to add, that after its founder had passed away, the school was not allowed to fall with him, but continued to be supported by his beneficent landlord, the Duke of Buccleugh. But who, indeed, could have allowed such a memorial of such a man to perish?

From this slight digression, we return to the poet in his cottage at Altrive, and the young happy family that surrounded him. But even here, and thus, they could not remain undisturbed; and the influx of unreflecting friends or idle tourists continued to roll in the direction of Altrive Lake, in greater abundance and with more unintermitting constancy than ever, inflicting upon that quiet mansion the waste, toil, and expenditure of a well-frequented inn, without the wholesome check of compt and reckoning. Under such inflictions what revenue could stand, or landlord be otherwise than an impoverished man? Poor Hogg, too!—besides that his good nature could not say them, Nay, his past life had so inured him to society, that he was ready for all with a welcome. He enlarged his cottage by additional buildings, and this only increased the number of the comers. On one day, a friend went to dine with the Shepherd and his family when none but themselves were to be present—and before the day had closed, fourteen additional persons had also dined in the house! Nor were the guests of Altrive Lake always confined to mere dinner-friends, whom a transient visit might suffice; on the contrary, as the place stood alone, they often made good their quarters, and were claimants both for bed and board. Well might the Shepherd say, as he did, when on convoying a friend upon his way one evening he looked back for a moment at his home that was buzzing with company:—"My bit house is e'en now just like a bee-skep, fu' o' happy leevin' creatures—and nae doubt, like a bee-skep, it will hae to cast some day, when it can hand its inhabitants nae langer." To the question of Allan Cunningham, "What is your pen about now, Mr. Hogg?" he answered, "Pen! it might as well be in the goose's wing; I cannot get writing any for the visits of my friends: I'm never a day without some."

While this incessant drain of his resources compelled him in season and out of season to write, the continual demands upon his time and attention made him write hurriedly and by snatches. Thus circumstanced, it was impossible for him either to improve his intellectual powers or increase his literary reputation; and whether at Altrive Lake or Mount-Benger, he never was able to surpass, or even to equal, what he had produced in his earlier days, when he studied and wrote as an unnoticed shepherd, with the hillock for his chair, his knee for a writing-desk, and no company but his sheep to mark his progress. Thus he had produced the best of his songs, the chief part of the "Queen's Wake," and his tales of pastoral life. Might he not have produced something better still had the world but let him alone? Alas that the experiment was never tried! His worshippers, like the Carthaginians of old, bound their idol with chains, and then grumbled that he could not step forth at their invocations. And it was now too late to repair the evil they had wrought. With the necessity of writing still as urgent as ever, the Shepherd's authorship from this period was chiefly confined to the reproduction of his old works in new and improved editions. With this explanation, we return to the brief period that still remained of his literary career.

In 1829, a collection of Hogg's best songs that could be recovered, about one hundred and forty in all, with illustrative notes, was published by Blackwood, which yielded a profitable return to the author. On the following year, the same publisher printed a thousand copies of a miscellaneous work written by the Shepherd, but did not venture to publish it, "for fear of that great bugbear, REFORM." From this short notice of Hogg, we may infer that the work was of a political character, and in strong opposition to the popular bias of the period. If so, it was fortunate perhaps for the Shepherd that it was withheld. At this time the reform spasm was at such a height, that no popularity, whether literary or otherwise, could oppose it with impunity; and the terrible outbreaks of it in the earlier part of the following year at Jedburgh, in which the lately-worshipped Sir Walter Scott was hissed, mobbed, and threatened with burking, evinced the danger which Hogg may in this case have escaped, through the wise caution of Mr. Blackwood.

As the fashion which Scott had adopted from necessity of publishing a complete series of his works in cheap, handsome volumes, had been followed by some of our best writers, who were thus able to occupy themselves on easy terms in their declining days, and retire gracefully from the stage, the plan was especially suited for Hogg, who had already written so much. By such a method he might also increase both his profits and his fame, neither of which, he reasonably conceived, had as yet been commensurate with his deserts. He entered into a negotiation for the purpose with Mr. James Cochrane, bookseller in Pall-Mall, and having

agreed on favourable terms, he went to London on the 1st of January, 1832. The series was to commence with his prose works, and he proceeded to collect and revise for publication the portion called the "Altrive Tales," which were to be issued in volumes every two months. But such an arrival as that of the Ettrick Shepherd in London could not be unnoticed: many had read his works and wondered at their excellence; and still more had become familiar with a phantom bearing his name, who constituted the life and soul of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. An unlearned, untaught rustic, who had so sung and so written, was such a marvel as even sight-seeing London was not likely to behold above once in a century, if ever at all; and happy was the coterie and privileged above all others, that could allure him within its circle! Among these holiday demonstrations with which London delights to welcome the arrival of an illustrious stranger, was the never-failing one of a public dinner, held in Freemasons' Hall, at which nearly two hundred persons, including nobles, members of parliament, and the most distinguished in science and literature, attended, while our countryman Sir John Malcolm officiated as president. But the poetical accompaniments of the festival were more endearing to the Shepherd's heart than either the high rank and distinction of its members, or the laudations of their speeches—for the day selected was the anniversary of the birth-day of Burns; two sons of Burns sat at the left hand of the president; and after dinner, Hogg brewed punch in the punch-bowl of Burns, which had been brought from Paisley for the occasion.

But a long chapter would be needed to tell how he was followed and stared at, how he was invited, feted, and feasted, and what struggles were made by the cockney literati and sentimental blue-stockings to retail his sayings in his own broad original Doric. It was indeed a passing show, a pleasing dream of night—but a happy change withal from the rumbling cart-wheels and muddy streets of every-day life, in which he would so soon have to plod once more the remainder of his pilgrimage. He therefore enjoyed it while he could, and was wise in doing so, while his memory afterwards regarded it as the happiest era of his life. But it was not wholly to the gay assemblies of the west end, or the literary *soirees* of the back-shops in Pall-Mall or the Row, that his enjoyments were confined; and, amidst the more humble, but not less important wonders of this great Babylon which he contemplated with a curious, thoughtful eye, few sights attracted him so much as the London provision-markets. He understood their commodities, while the vastness of their collections overwhelmed him. One of his remarks to a friend upon the subject was characteristic: "Alas, sir, it would have broken your heart as nearly as it did mine, to see the great cart-loads o' dead laverocks that they bring into yon city. Where they get them, or how they catch them, is ill to ken; but man takes advantage o' a' creatures, the best and the bonniest as weel as the warst and most ungainly. I have a suspicion that the folk yonder wad hae mair delight in seeing them cast in to a cart yon gate, aboon ane anither, than they wad hae in seeing them rise in a May morning frae 'mang the dewy bent, a' in ae flock, off the top o' Ettrick-pen, where, puir things, they could sing their fill in safety, with the braid blue sky o' Scotland aboon them. I remember when I read, in my young days, in Bruce's *Travels* that the larks sing the same notes in Abyssinia as they do here, and as there can be nae doubt but our Highland pibrochs are just imitations o' their sangs, I thought that it must be a tolerable country after a'. But I trust that our Scottish laverocks, at least, will never show themselves sic fools as to cross the Border into England, to be baken into pies and devoured yon gate."

After a sojourn of three months in London, the Shepherd returned to Scotland. In the meantime the first volume of the series was published on the 31st of March, under the title of "Altrive Tales: collected among the Peasantry of Scotland and from Foreign Adventures. By the Ettrick Shepherd. With illustrations by George Cruickshanks." It was his greatest, and as he reasonably hoped, his best adventure in literature, in which all his stock was to be embarked anew, and a wholesale amends obtained for every former failure. Even yet, however, fortune was not weary of disappointing him: Mr. Cochrane his publisher became bankrupt, and the "Altrive Tales" were discontinued. He grieved for a short time over the disappointment, and then "whistled it down the wind;" he was now inured to such mischances, and he knew too well that they could not be amended by regrets and lamentations. In the following year, also, a testimonial of public esteem consoled him for the failure. His countrymen proposed to give him a public dinner to express their admiration of his talents and esteem for his personal worth; and it took place in the Tontine of Peebles, his old friend, Professor John Wilson of the university of Edinburgh, occupying the chair, while another loved friend of the Shepherd, William Aitchison, Esq. of Menzion, officiated as vice-president. The dinner was attended by many of the most distinguished literary characters of Scotland, and several from England, while the eloquent speeches were worthy of the man and the purpose that had brought them together. Justly might the Shepherd declare, as he did on this occasion, that he had sought fame while yet among the mountains he carried the crook and wore

the plaid; that he had afterwards sought it in the crowded city; and now that when he saw so many talented gentlemen of the land around him, and thus met on his account, he might well exclaim, "I have found it at last!"

During the years 1832 and 1833 he produced no new work, but employed himself in contributions of tales, essays, and songs to magazines and other periodicals. In 1834 he produced a volume entitled "A series of Lay Sermons on Good Principles and Good-breeding," which was published by Mr. James Fraser of Regent Street, London. It might seem a startling innovation that a poet and novelist should become a preacher; but when clergymen were becoming writers of novels and romances, it was not wonderful that popular writers of fiction should occasionally become authors of sermons. Hogg also could plead the examples of Coleridge, Scott, and other eminent laymen, who had in this form exercised their proper vocation of teaching the principles of religion and sound morality. Moreover, the sermons of Hogg, instead of aspiring to the dignity of the pulpit or the authority of the theologian, were homely moral essays full of unaffected good sense, and inculcative of those precepts for every-day-life on which the welfare and happiness of society so mainly depend. During the same year, he published the "Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott," a work which, somewhat unreasonably perhaps, called forth the ire of Sir Walter's son-in-law and biographer, who regarded such a subject as his own exclusive property. In this little volume, although the harmless vanity of the Shepherd occasionally peeps out, it is amply redeemed by his interesting anecdotes of Scott, his high and just appreciation of his illustrious mentor, and the affectionate enthusiasm of his details. "Is it not a proud boast for an old shepherd," he exclaims, "that for thirty years he could call this man 'friend,' and associate with him every day and hour that he chose? Yes, it is my proudest boast. Sir Walter sought me out in the wilderness, and attached himself to me before I had ever seen him, and, although I took cross fits with him, his interest in me never subsided for one day or one moment."

Although the publication of the "Altrive Tales" had been so unsuccessful, their author was still ready to renew the attempt; and in 1834 he employed himself in preparing a fresh series, partly old and partly new, under the title of "Montrose Tales." In this case, also, Mr. Cochrane, who had resumed business, and for whom the Shepherd entertained a warm friendship, was preferred as their publisher. The "Montrose Tales" appeared in April, 1835, and were so favourably received that a brisk sale was certain, when the prospect was overcast by the failure of Mr. Cochrane, who, only eight months after their publication, again became a bankrupt. Thus, even to the last, the persevering attempts of Hogg were followed by disappointment. From the beginning to the close of his literary life he had been unsuccessful, unless fame alone is to be held as a sufficient compensation. But even before this last of his disasters happened, he was removed beyond the reach of earthly calamity. Although of robust vigorous frame and active habits, it was impossible that the wear and tear of such an intellectual life, and the hopes and fears with which it had been crowded, would be accompanied with an extended old age; and for two or three years previous, his wonted uniform good health had begun to forsake him, although no serious illness had shown itself. This continued until the autumn of 1835, when in August he went for about three weeks to the moors, and felt himself benefited by the change: but in October he became so much worse, that, by the end of the month, he was confined to bed. At first his complaint was thought to be jaundice, which might easily be cured; but symptoms soon showed that it was a latent affection of the liver, from which fatal consequences might be apprehended. These fears were speedily realized; for after a severe illness of four weeks, he expired on the 21st of November, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. His remains were interred in the churchyard of Ettrick, within a short distance of the cottage in which he was born; and a stone erected by his widow, of which the appropriate inscription is his name alone, with the dates of his birth and death, and a harp neatly carved, points out to inquiring strangers the place of his rest. And besides these indications, his grave was covered with turf brought from a distance on which the daisies grew abundantly, so that in summer, the little spot was radiant with these beautiful wild-flowers, in contrast with the dark monotonous green that pervaded the rest of the churchyard. It was such a memorial as the Ettrick Shepherd himself would have prized as the best and most appropriate of monuments.

In person and appearance the bard of the "Queen's Wake" was an excellent specimen of our stalwart Scottish peasantry—a peasantry in which, more than any other in Europe, ample capacities, and the power of rising above their sphere, are so signally evinced. In height he was five feet ten inches and a half: his broad chest and square shoulders indicated health and strength; while a well-rounded leg, and small ankle and foot, showed the active shepherd who could outstrip the runaway sheep after a short chase, and bring it back to the pen or flock. It was not without good reason that he, a complete shepherd to the last, valued these personal distinctions which his own class so highly prized, and was both an enthusiastic and successful competitor in the Border games of bodily activity,

strength, and skill. His hair, in his younger days, was auburn, slightly inclining to yellow, which afterwards became dark brown, mixed with gray; his eyes, which were dark blue, were bright and intelligent. His features were irregular, and, except when kindled by strong emotion, were habitually expressive of good nature, heightened by a dash of that quiet, sly humour which so often forms a part of the blunt Scottish physiognomy—while his high and ample forehead redeemed the countenance from every charge of common-place homeliness, by showing that no ordinary volume of brain lay within it. As such, it was difficult for painters to do justice to his portrait; for as a quiet sitter, he looked like any ordinary man, rather than a son of inspiration; but he comforted them for their failures, by telling them that his face was out of all rule of drawing. The best likenesses taken of him when he had passed the middle stage of life, were by Mr. James Scott, from the London Academy, who had been sent to Scotland for the purpose by Allan Cunningham, the affectionate friend of the Shepherd; and by that well-known and eminent portrait painter, Sir John Watson Gordon, president of the Royal Scottish Academy.

But whatever difficulty may be experienced in obtaining a full, correct idea of his personal appearance, whether from portrait or description, no one can be at a loss as to his intellectual character and his genius. These are stamped upon his writings, confirmed by the durable testimony of half a century, and acknowledged wherever the English language is used or understood. Nay, more than this—the Englishman, to whom much of the Shepherd's writings are in a strange language, can yet perceive their world-wide expression of nature, their beauty, and their truthfulness, and be as zealous in his admiration as the inhabitant of Ettrick or Teviotdale. What but the beautiful and the true, and these of a very high order, could have secured such an unanimity? Nor is it enough to say that the name of the Ettrick Shepherd still survives, while so many of his contemporaries have shrunk into ordinary dimensions, or drifted into utter oblivion. In spite of the political rancour that assailed him, the envy that maligned him, and the reckless wit which caricatured what it could not or might not condemn—obstacles that retarded his progress, and threw a cloud upon his fame, under which inferior worth would have been extinguished—in spite of these, his reputation has been growing every year, until now, that it has eclipsed his maligners, and assumed a higher place than it was allowed to occupy while he lived. More than this, it is now unnecessary to say. His renown may be safely committed to the world at large, who will not willingly let it die.

As may readily be surmised, the Ettrick Shepherd at his death had little or no property to leave. His life from childhood had been a continual struggle, of which the best that can be said is, that he was *not* overcome. He was always in deep waters, where nothing was above the surface but his head. When he died, therefore, his honoured wreath was the principal inheritance which he could leave to his family, consisting of a widow with one son and four daughters, the children as yet too young to be fully conscious of their loss. On this he had often and sadly mused before he was taken away from them. But was not his country deeply in debt to him? And would not every Scotsman be proud to befriend them, and provide for them? Such was his answer which he gave to Prudence, in his half-sad, half-lively song of the "Monitors," which he composed during his last years:—

"But, Bard—ye dinna mind your life
  Is waning down to winter snell—
That round your hearth young sprouts are rife,
  An' mae to care for than yoursel."
Yes, that I do, that hearth could tell
  How aft the tear-drap blinds my ee;
What can I do by spur or spell?
  An' by my faith it done shall be.

And think—through poortith's eiry breach,
  Should want approach wi' threatening brand,
I'll leave them canty sangs will reach
  From John-o'-Groats to Solway strand.
Then what are houses, goud, or land,
  To sic an heirship left in fee?
An' I think mair o' auld Scotland,
  Than to be fear'd for mine or me."

Alas! it was a perilous hope. Where, or with whom, rests a nation's responsibility? "What is everybody's business"—the proverb is somewhat musty; but when thousands are responsible for an individual debt, we know that its chance of payment is desperate. Whatever might have been the kindness of the private friends of the deceased in behalf of his bereaved family, his claim to public and national gratitude was suffered to fall into oblivion; and year after year thousands who continued to be delighted with the productions of his genius, made no inquiry about his widow or children, or else they satisfied their consciences with the vague declaration that "something ought to be done for them." But justice, though so tardy, arrived at last. One of those rare individuals with whom to feel justly and act promptly are inseparable cause and effect, appealed to head quarters upon the subject, and the appeal was answered (in 1853) by an annual royal pension which was settled upon the widow of the Ettrick Shepherd.

It was not here however that the public gratitude, now woke up to the consciousness of its duty, was to stop short: it was felt that such a national poet was worthy of nothing less than a national com-

memoration; and in the sure hope of such a natural reaction, Christopher North, in 1824, thus predicted the effects of the change:—"My beloved Shepherd, some half-century hence, your effigy will be seen on some bonny green knowe in the Forest, with its honest face looking across St. Mary's Loch, and up towards the Grey Mare's Tail, while by moonlight all your own fairies will weave a dance round its pedestal." In 1858 the proposal to erect a public monument to the memory of Hogg was made, and on the 28th of June, 1860, the structure was inaugurated. The site is picturesque and happily chosen, being mid-way between the Loch of the Lowes and the Loch of St. Mary's. There, upon a square pedestal about ten feet in height, and adorned with characteristic emblems and inscriptions, sits the figure of the poet upon an oak-root, his head the while slightly depressed towards St. Mary's Loch, which he loved so well, and on the banks of which he was so often visited with his best inspirations, while his favourite dog Hector is couched lovingly at his feet. The monument both pedestal and statue are of freestone, and both in site and structure is correspondent to the man it commemorates, being not only an ornament, but a part of the scenery of which it forms the simple unobtrusive crown. Here the learned and the talented in their pilgrimage will be reminded of the untaught one whose genius made him all that they seek to be. Here the poet will muse until his emulation is kindled with somewhat of the undying flame of him who has passed away. Here even the rustic, while he journeys near the spot, or rests amidst his labours, will ask himself the question, "May not I too do something to benefit the world, and be remembered when I am no more?" And with all the question will arise, which was asked by so many even while he was still living, "When will the world see such a Shepherd again?"

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF THE

ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

THE QUEEN'S WAKE.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THIS admirable poem of the "Queen's Wake," or Festival, upon which the poetical fame of its author has been chiefly established, is in its plan both felicitous and simple. Queen Mary has returned from France in the bloom of her surpassing beauty; and at her landing is hailed with rapture by her subjects, who are delighted with the noble appearance and graceful courtesy of their long-expected sovereign. But not the least striking of these loyal welcomes that greeted her was the song of an aged minstrel; and on expressing her approbation of the strain, she is assured by the Earl of Argyle that it is tame compared with the poetry of the Highland bards. Desirous to test the truth of the assertion, and learn the wondrous power of Scottish song, Mary proclaims a royal Wake, at which all minstrels, Highland or Lowland, are invited to appear in their native garb, and contend with each other in poetical competition, with a song or ballad exclusively of a Scottish character, the victor to be rewarded with a harp as the token of his pre-eminence. Upon this simple thread the various productions of the rival poets, however diversified in theme, character, and style, are naturally and harmoniously strung together, and the reader's interest is excited by finding himself placed among the judges and made a party in their award.

The competition, which is held in the palace of Holyrood, extends over three nights, and the songs and ballads of the rival minstrels are thirteen in number. In introducing the several poets, the author takes the opportunity of embodying several of his tuneful contemporaries, who serve as the principal lay figures in this sketch of a poetical contest. Among these is himself, and he describes with great good humour and abundance of glee the merriment excited by his unpromising name, and uncourtly dress and figure. Of the thirteen productions which compose the poem of the "Queen's Wake," the merits are various, but happily none of them descend to mere mediocrity: each is worthy in its degree of being sung before the beautiful Queen of Scotland and her attendant ladies, and the high lords and barons who were afterwards so conspicuously mixed in the great events of that stirring and important period. But three of them are especially worthy of notice, and will secure the general preference of the readers, independently of the award of the judges—these are the Witch of Fife, Kilmeny, and the Abbot M'Kinnon. The first, which is the only comic ballad in the collection, evinces that power of the ludicrous which Hogg possessed in an eminent degree, and its effect is heightened by the poetical grandeur with which the midnight voyages of the sorceresses over earth and ocean are delineated. The pious horror of the witch's husband when he is made cognizant of the unholy practices of his partner, and his eagerness to join in them when he learns that all the good cheer of larders and wine-cellars is patent to their entrance, is as true to nature as it is diverting. The poem of Kilmeny is so beautiful, that had Hogg written nothing more, it would have sufficed to place him in the front rank of our national poets. It describes the abduction of a fair and beautiful maiden to fairy-land, the sights of beauty she witnessed there, and the wonderful revelations that were made to her, in language which for melody, expressiveness, and richness is almost as wonderful as the tale itself. Similar to it in character, and almost equal to it in poetical merit, is the Abbot M'Kinnon, a tale of the last days of the brotherhood of Iona and their guilty superior, in which, abandoning the principles of the order, and disregarding the warnings of their founder, Saint Columba, they are visited by him with a terrible but righteous retribution. The descriptions of Matilda of Skye in the disguise of a page—of that wonderful ocean-temple the pillared isle of Staffa—and of the phantom saint of Iona bewailing the approaching doom of his apostate successor, which he is unable to avert, are such perfect pictures of their several kinds, that once read, they will always be remembered as the happiest efforts of their author. Taken as a whole, the "Queen's Wake" was certainly one of the choicest poetical productions of its day, irrespective of the fact that he who produced it was the rough, simple, untaught shepherd whom he has himself so disparagingly described among the competitors for the prize of poetical excellence.

THE QUEEN'S WAKE.

DEDICATION TO FIRST EDITION.

TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES,
A SHEPHERD
AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF SCOTLAND
DEDICATES THIS POEM.

INTRODUCTION.

Now burst, ye winter clouds that lower,
Fling from your folds the piercing shower;
Sing to the tower and leafless tree,
Ye cold winds of adversity;
Your blights, your chilling influence shed
On wareless heart and houseless head;
Your ruth or fury I disdain:
I've found my mountain Lyre again.

Come to my heart, my only stay!
Companion of a happier day!
Thou gift of Heaven, thou pledge of good,
Harp of the mountain and the wood!
I little thought, when first I tried
Thy notes by lone Saint Mary's side,
When in a deep untrodden den,
I found thee in the bracken glen—
I little thought that idle toy
Should e'er become my only joy.

A maiden's youthful smiles had wove
Around my heart the toils of love,
When first thy magic wires I rung,
And on the breeze thy numbers flung:
The fervid tear played in mine eye;
I trembled, wept, and wondered why.
Sweet was the thrilling ecstasy;
I know not if 'twas love or thee.

Weened not my heart, when youth had flown,
Friendship would fade or fortune frown;
When pleasure, love, and mirth were past,
That thou should'st prove my all at last.
Jeered by conceit and lordly pride,
I flung my soothing harp aside;
With wayward fortune strove a while,
Wrecked in a world of self and guile.
Again I sought the bracken hill;
Again sat musing by the rill:
My wild sensations all were gone,
And only thou wert left alone.
Long hast thou in the moorland lain,
Now welcome to my heart again!

The russet weed of mountain gray
No more shall round thy border play;
No more the brake-flowers o'er thee piled
Shall mar thy tones and measures wild:
Harp of the forest, thou shalt be
Fair as the bud on forest tree!
Sweet be thy strains as those that swell
In Ettrick's green and fairy dell;
Soft as the breeze of falling even,
And purer than the dews of heaven.

Of minstrel honours now no more;
Of bards who sung in days of yore;
Of gallant chiefs in courtly guise;
Of ladies' smiles, of ladies' eyes;
Of royal feast and obsequies;
When Caledon with look severe,
Saw Beauty's hand her sceptre bear—
By cliff and haunted wild I'll sing,
Responsive to thy dulcet string.

When wanes the circling year away,
When scarcely smiles the doubtful day,
Fair daughter of Dunedin, say,
Hast thou not heard at midnight deep
Soft music on thy slumbers creep?
At such a time, if careless thrown
Thy slender form on couch of down,
Hast thou not felt to nature true
The tear steal from thine eye so blue?
If then thy guiltless bosom strove
In blissful dreams of conscious love,
And even shrunk from proffer bland
Of lover's visionary hand;
On such ecstatic dream when brake
The music of the midnight Wake,
Hast thou not weened thyself on high,
List'ning to angels' melody,
'Scaped from a world of cares away,
To dream of love and bliss for aye?

The dream dispelled, the music gone,
Hast thou not, sighing, all alone
Proffered thy vows to Heaven, and then
Blest the sweet Wake, and slept again?

Then list, ye maidens, to my lay,
Though old the tale, and past the day;
Those Wakes, now played by minstrels poor,
At midnight's darkest, chillest hour,
Those humble Wakes,[1] now scorned by all,
Were first begun in courtly hall,
When royal MARY, blithe of mood,
Kept holiday at Holyrood.

Scotland, involved in factious broils,
Groaned deep beneath her woes and toils,
And looked o'er meadow, dale, and lea,
For many a day her queen to see;
Hoping that then her woes would cease,
And all her valleys smile in peace.
The spring was passed, the summer gone,
Still vacant stood the Scottish throne:
But scarce had autumn's mellow hand
Waved her rich banner o'er the land,
When rang the shouts from tower and tree
That Scotland's queen was on the sea.
Swift spread the news o'er down and dale,
Swift as the lively autumn gale;
Away, away, it echoed still,
O'er many a moor and Highland hill,
Till rang each glen and verdant plain,
From Cheviot to the northern main.

Each bard attuned the loyal lay,
And for Dunedin hied away;
Each harp was strung in woodland bower,
In praise of Beauty's bonniest flower.
The chiefs forsook their ladies fair,
The priest his beads and books of prayer;
The farmer left his harvest day,
The shepherd all his flocks to stray;
The forester forsook the wood,
And hasted on to Holyrood.

After a youth by woes o'ercast,
After a thousand sorrows past,
The lovely Mary once again
Set foot upon her native plain;
Kneeled on the pier with modest grace,
And turned to heaven her beauteous face.
'Twas then the caps in air were blended,
A thousand thousand shouts ascended;
Shivered the breeze around the throng;
Gray barrier cliffs the peals prolong;
And every tongue gave thanks to Heaven,
That Mary to their hopes was given.

Her comely form and graceful mien,
Bespoke the lady and the queen;
The woes of one so fair and young
Moved every heart and every tongue.
Driven from her home, a helpless child,
To brave the winds and billows wild;
An exile bred in realms afar,
Amid commotion, broil, and war:
In one short year her hopes all crossed—
A parent, husband, kingdom lost,
And all ere eighteen years had shed
Their honours o'er her royal head;—
For such a queen, the Stuarts' heir,
A queen so courteous, young, and fair,
Who would not every foe defy?
Who would not stand? who would not die!

Light on her airy steed she sprung,
Around with golden tassels hung,
No chieftain there rode half so free,
Or half so light and gracefully.
How sweet to see her ringlets pale
Wide waving in the southland gale,
Which through the broom-wood blossoms flew,
To fan her cheeks of rosy hue!
Whene'er it heaved her bosom's screen,
What beauties in her form were seen!
And when her courser's mane it swung,
A thousand silver bells were rung.
A sight so fair, on Scottish plain,
A Scot shall never see again.

When Mary turned her wondering eyes
On rocks that seemed to prop the skies;

[1] In former days, the term *wake* was only used to distinguish the festive meeting which took place on the evening previous to the dedication of any particular church or chapel. The company sat up all the night, and, in England, amused themselves in various ways, as their inclinations were by habit or study directed. In Scotland, however, which was always the land of music and of song, music and song were the principal, often the only amusements of the wake. These songs were generally of a sacred or serious nature, and were chanted to the old simple melodies of the country. *The Bush aboon Traquair, The Broom of Cowdenknows, John, come kiss me now,* and many others, are still extant, set to the Psalms of David and other spiritual songs, the Psalms being turned into a rude metre corresponding to the various measures of the tunes.

The difference in the application of the term which exists in the two sister kingdoms sufficiently explains the consequences of the wakes in either. In England they have given rise to many fairs and festivals of long standing; and, from that origin, every fair or festival is denominated a *wake*. In Scotland the term is not used to distinguish anything either subsistent or relative, save those serenades played by itinerant and nameless minstrels in the streets and squares of Edinburgh, which are inhabited by the great and wealthy, after midnight, about the time of the Christmas holidays. These seem to be the only remainder of the ancient wakes now in Scotland, and their effect upon a mind that delights in music is soothing and delicious beyond all previous conception. A person who can relish the concord of sweet sounds, gradually recalled from sleep by the music of the wakes, of which he had no previous anticipation, never fails of being deprived, for a considerable time, of all recollection what condition, what place, or what world he is in. The minstrels, who, in the reign of the Stuarts, enjoyed privileges which were even denied to the principal nobility, were, by degrees, driven from the tables of the great to the second, and afterwards to the common hall, that their music and songs might be heard, while they themselves were unseen. From the common hall they were obliged to retire to the porch or court; and so low have the characters of the minstrels descended, that the performers of the Christmas wakes are wholly unknown to the most part of those whom they serenade. They seem to be despised, but enjoy some small privileges, in order to keep up a name of high and ancient origin.

On palace, park, and battled pile;
On lake, on river, sea, and isle;
O'er woods and meadows bathed in dew,
To distant mountains wild and blue;
She thought the isle that gave her birth
The sweetest, wildest land on earth.

Slowly she ambled on her way
Amid her lords and ladies gay.
Priest, abbot, layman, all were there,
And presbyter with look severe:
There rode the lords of France and Spain,
Of England, Flanders, and Lorraine,
While serried thousands round them stood,
From shore of Leith to Holyrood.[1]

Though Mary's heart was light as air
To find a home so wild and fair;
To see a gathered nation by,
And rays of joy from every eye:
Though frequent shouts the welkin broke,
Though courtiers bowed and ladies spoke,
An absent look they oft could trace
Deep settled on her comely face.
Was it the thought that all alone
She must support a rocking throne?
That Caledonia's rugged land
Might scorn a lady's weak command,
And the Red Lion's haughty eye
Scowl at a maiden's feet to lie?

No; 'twas the notes of Scottish song,
Soft pealing from the countless throng:
So mellowed came the distant swell,
That on her ravished ear it fell
Like dew of heaven, at evening close,
On forest flower or woodland rose.
For Mary's heart, to nature true,
The powers of song and music knew:
But all the choral measures bland,
Of anthems sung in southern land,
Appeared an useless pile of art,
Unfit to sway or melt the heart,
Compared with that which floated by—
Her simple native melody.

As she drew nigh the Abbey stile,
She halted, reined, and bent the while:
She heard the Caledonian lyre
Pour forth its notes of Runic fire;
But scarcely caught the ravished queen
The minstrel's song that flowed between;
Entranced upon the strain she hung;
'Twas thus the gray-haired minstrel sung:

The Song.

"O! Lady dear, fair is thy noon,
But man is like th' inconstant moon:
Last night she smiled o'er lawn and lea;
That moon will change, and so will he.

"Thy time, dear lady, 's a passing shower;
Thy beauty is but a fading flower;
Watch thy young bosom and maiden eye,
For the shower must fall, and the floweret die."

[1] Holinshed describes Queen Mary's landing in Scotland, with her early misfortunes and accomplishments, after this manner: "She arrived at Leith the 20th of August, in the year of our Lord 1561, where she was honourably received by the Earl of Argyle, the Lord Erskine, the prior of St. Andrew's, and the burgesses of Edinburgh, and conveyed to the Abbie of Holierood-house, for (as saith Buchanan) when some had spread abroad her landing in Scotland, the nobility and others assembled out of all parts of the realme, as it were to a common spectacle.

"This did they, partly to congratulate her return, and partly to show the dutie which they alwais bear unto her (when she was absent), either to have thanks therefor, or to prevent the slanders of the enemies; wherefore not a few, by these beginnings of her reign, did gesse what would follow, although, in those so variable notions of the minds of the people, every one was very desirous to see their queen offered unto them (unlooked for), after so many haps of both fortunes as had befallen her. For, when she was but six days old, she lost her father among the cruel tempests of battle, and was with great diligence brought up by her mother (being a chosen and worthy person), but yet left as a prize to others, by reason of civil sedition in Scotland, and of outward wars with other nations, being further led abroad to all the dangers of frowning fortune, before she could know what evil did mean.

"For leaving her own country, she was nourished as a banished person, and hardly preserved in life from the weapons of her enemies and violence of the seas. After which, fortune began to flatter her, in that she honoured her with a worthy marriage, which, in truth, was rather a shadow of joie to this queen than any comfort at all. For, shortly after the same, all things were turned to sorrow, by the death of her new young husband, and of her old and grieved mother, by loss of her new kingdom, and by the doubtful possession of her old heritable realme. But as for these things she was both pitied and praised, so was she also for gifts of nature as much beloved and favoured, in that beneficial nature (or rather good God) had indued her with a beautiful face, a well composed body, an excellent wit, a mild nature, and good behaviour, which she had artificially furthered by courtly education and affable demeanour. Whereby, at the first sight, she wan unto her the hearts of most, and confirmed the love of her faithful subjects."—*Hol.* p. 314. Arbroath Ed.

With regard to the music, which so deeply engaged her attention, we have different accounts by contemporaries, and those at complete variance with one another. Knox says, "Fyres of joy were set furth at night, and a companie of maist honest men, with instruments of musick, gave ther salutation at hir chalmer windo: the melodie, as sche alledged, lyked her weill, and sche willed the sam to be continued sum nychts efter with grit diligence." But Dufresnoy, who was one of the party who accompanied the queen, gives a very different account of these Scottish minstrels. "We landed at Leith," says he, "and went from thence to Edinburgh, which is but a short league distant. The queen went there on horseback, and the lords and ladies who accompanied her upon the little wretched hackneys of the country, and as wretchedly caparisoned; at sight of which the queen began to weep, and to compare them with the pomp and superb palfreys of France. But there was no remedy but patience. What was worst of all, being arrived at Edinburgh, and retired to rest in the Abbey (which is really a fine building, and not at all partaking of the rudeness of that country), there came under her window a crew of five or six hundred scoundrels from the city, who gave her a serenade with wretched violins and little rebecks, of which there are enough in that country, and began to sing psalms so miserably mistimed and mistuned, that nothing could be worse. Alas! what music! and what a night's rest!"

This Frenchman has had no taste for Scottish music—such another concert is certainly not in record.

"What ails my queen?" said good Argyle,
"Why fades upon her cheek the smile!
Say, rears your steed too fierce and high?
Or sits your golden seat awry?"

"Ah no, my lord! this noble steed,
Of Rouen's calm and generous breed,
Has borne me over hill and plain,
Swift as the dun-deer of the Seine.
But such a wild and simple lay,
Poured from the harp of minstrel gray,
My every sense away it stole,
And swayed awhile my raptured soul.
O! say, my lord (for you must know
What strains along your valleys flow,
And all the hoards of Highland lore),
Was ever song so sweet before?—"

Replied the earl, as round he flung—
"Feeble the strain that minstrel sung!
My royal dame, if once you heard
The Scottish lay from Highland bard,
Then might you say in raptures meet,
No song was ever half so sweet.

It nerves the arm of warrior wight
To deeds of more than mortal might;
'Twill make the maid, in all her charms,
Fall weeping in her lover's arms;
'Twill charm the mermaid from the deep;
Make mountain oaks to bend and weep;
Thrill every heart with horrors dire,
And shape the breeze to forms of fire.

When poured from green-wood bower at even,
'Twill draw the spirits down from heaven;
And all the fays that haunt the wood,
To dance around in frantic mood,
And tune their mimic harps so boon
Beneath the cliff and midnight moon.
Ah! yes, my queen! if once you heard
The Scottish lay from Highland bard,
Then might you say, in raptures meet,
No song was ever half so sweet."

Queen Mary lighted in the court;
Queen Mary joined the evening's sport;
Yet, though at table all were seen
To wonder at her air and mien;
Though courtiers fawned and ladies sung,
Still in her ear the accents rung—
"*Watch thy young bosom and maiden eye*
For the shower must fall, and the floweret die."
These words prophetic seemed to be
Foreboding woe and misery;
And much she wished to prove, ere long,
The wondrous powers of Scottish song.

When next to ride the queen was bound,
To view the city's ample round,
On high amid the gathered crowd,
A herald thus proclaimed aloud:—

"Peace, peace to Scotland's wasted vales,
To her dark heaths and Highland dales;
To her brave sons of warlike mood,
To all her daughters fair and good:
Peace o'er her ruined vales shall pour,
Like beam of heaven behind the shower.
Let every harp and echo ring;
Let maidens smile and poets sing;
For love and peace entwined shall sleep,
Calm as the moonbeam on the deep,
By waving wood and wandering rill,
On purple heath and Highland hill.

The soul of warrior stern to charm,
And bigotry and rage disarm,
Our Queen commands that every bard
Due honours have and high regard.
If to his song of rolling fire
He joins the Caledonian lyre,
And skill in legendary lore,
Still higher shall his honours soar.
For all the arts beneath the heaven,
That man has found or God has given,
None draws the soul so sweet away,
As music's melting mystic lay;
Slight emblem of the bliss above,
It soothes the spirit all to love.

"To cherish this attractive art,
To lull the passions, mend the heart,
And break the moping zealot's chains,
Hear what our lovely queen ordains:

"Each Caledonian bard must seek
Her courtly halls on Christmas week,
That then the royal Wake may be
Cheered by their thrilling minstrelsy.
No ribaldry the queen must hear,
No song unmeet for maiden's ear,
No jest, nor adulation bland,
But legends of our native land;
And he whom most the court regards,
High be his honours and rewards.
Let every Scottish bard give ear,
Let every Scottish bard appear,
He then before the court must stand,
In native garb with harp in hand.
At home no minstrel dare to tarry:
High the behest.—God save Queen Mary!

Little recked they, that idle throng,
Of music's power or minstrel's song:
But crowding their young queen around,
Whose stately courser pawed the ground,
Her beauty more their wonder swayed
Than all the noisy herald said;
Judging the proffer all in sport,
An idle whim of idle court.
But many a bard preferred his prayer;
For many a Scottish bard was there.
Quaked each fond heart with raptures strong,
Each thought upon his harp and song;

And turning home without delay,
Conned his wild strain by mountain gray.

Each glen was sought for tales of old,
Of luckless love, of warrior bold,
Of ravished maid, or stolen child
By freakish fairy of the wild;
Of sheeted ghost, that had revealed
Dark deeds of guilt, from man concealed;
Of boding dreams, of wandering spright,
Of dead-lights glimmering through the night;
Yea, every tale of ruth or weir
Could waken pity, love, or fear,
Were decked anew, with anxious pain,
And sung to native airs again.

Alas! those lays of fire once more
Are wrecked 'mid heaps of mouldering lore!
And feeble he who dares presume
That heavenly Wake-light to relume.
But, grieved the legendary lay
Should perish from our land for aye,
While sings the lark above the wold,
And all his flocks rest in the fold,
Fondly he strikes, beside the pen,
The harp of Yarrow's bracken glen.

December came; his aspect stern
Glared deadly o'er the mountain cairn;
A polar sheet was round him flung,
And ice-spears at his girdle hung;
O'er frigid field, and drifted cone,
He strode undaunted and alone;
Or, throned amid the Grampians gray,
Kept thaws and suns of heaven at bay.

Not stern December's fierce control
Could quench the flame of minstrel's soul:
Little recked they, our bards of old,
Of autumn's showers or winter's cold.
Sound slept they on the nighted hill,
Lulled by the winds or babbling rill,
Curtained within the winter cloud,
The heath their couch, the sky their shroud;
Yet their's the strains that touch the heart,
Bold, rapid, wild, and void of art.

Unlike the bards, whose milky lays
Delight in these degenerate days:
Their crystal spring and heather brown
Is changed to wine and couch of down;
Effeminate as lady gay,
Such as the bard, so is his lay!

But then was seen, from every vale,
Through drifting snows and rattling hail,
Each Caledonian minstrel true,
Dressed in his plaid and bonnet blue,
With harp across his shoulders slung,
And music murmuring round his tongue,
Forcing his way, in raptures high,
To Holyrood his skill to try.

Ah! when at home the songs they raised,
When gaping rustics stood and gazed,
Each bard believed, with ready will,
Unmatched his song, unmatched his skill.
But when the royal halls appeared,
Each aspect changed, each bosom feared;
And when in court of Holyrood
Filed harps and bards around him stood,
His eye emitted cheerless ray,
His hope, his spirit sunk away:
There stood the minstrel, but his mind
Seemed left in native glen behind.

Unknown to men of sordid heart,
What joys the poet's hopes impart;
Unknown how his high soul is torn
By cold neglect or canting scorn:
That meteor torch of mental light
A breath can quench, or kindle bright.
Oft has that mind, which braved serene
The shafts of poverty and pain,
The summer toil, the winter blast,
Fallen victim to a frown at last.
Easy the boon he asks of thee;
O! spare his heart in courtesy!

There rolled each bard his anxious eye,
Or strode his adversary by;
No cause was there for names to scan,
Each minstrel's plaid bespoke his clan;
And the blunt Borderer's plain array—
The bonnet broad and blanket gray.
Bard sought of bard a look to steal;
Eyes measured each from head to heel.
Much wonder rose, that men so famed,
Men save with rapture never named,
Looked only so—they could not tell—
Like other men, and scarce so well.
Though keen the blast, and long the way,
When twilight closed that dubious day,
When round the table all were set,
Small heart had they to talk or eat;
Red look askance, blunt whisper low,
Awkward remark, uncourtly bow,
Were all that pass'd in that bright throng,
That group of genuine sons of song.

One did the honours of the board,
Who seemed a courtier or a lord:
Strange his array and speech withal,
Gael deemed him southern—southern, Gael.
Courteous his mien, his accents weak,
Lady in manner as in make;
Yet round the board a whisper ran,
That that same gay and simpering man
A minstrel was, of wond'rous fame,
Who from a distant region came,
To bear the prize beyond the sea
To the green shores of Italy.

The wine was served, and, sooth to say,
Insensibly it stole away.

Thrice did they drain the allotted store,
And wondering skinkers dun for more;
Which vanished swifter than the first—
Little weened they the poet's thirst.

Still as that ruddy juice they drained,
The eyes were cleared, the speech regained;
And latent sparks of fancy glowed,
Till one abundant torrent flowed
Of wit, of humour, social glee,
Wild music, mirth, and revelry.

Just when a jest had thrilled the crowd,
Just when the laugh was long and loud,
Entered a squire with summons smart;
That was the knell that pierced the heart!
"The court awaits;" he bowed—was gone—
Our bards sat changed to busts of stone.
As ever ye heard the green-wood dell
On morn of June, one warbled swell,
If burst the thunder from on high,
How hushed the woodland melody:
Even so our bards shrunk at the view
Of what they wished, and what they knew.

Their numbers given, the lots were cast
To fix the names of first and last;
Then to the dazzling hall were led
Poor minstrels less alive than dead.

There such a scene entranced the view,
As heart of poet never knew.
'Twas not the flash of golden gear,
Nor blaze of silver chandelier;
Not Scotland's chiefs of noble air,
Nor dazzling rows of ladies fair;
'Twas one enthroned the rest above—
Sure 'twas the queen of grace and love!
Taper the form, and fair the breast
Yon radiant golden zones invest,
Where the vexed rubies blench in death,
Beneath yon lips and balmy breath;
Coronal gems of every dye
Look dim above yon beaming eye:
Yon cheeks outvie the dawning's glow,
Red shadowed on a wreath of snow.

Oft the rapt bard had thought alone,
Of charms by mankind never known,
Of virgins, pure as opening day,
Or bosom of the flower of May;
Oft dreamed of being free from stain,
Of maidens of the emerald main,
Of fairy dames in grove at even,
Of angels in the walks of heaven:
But, nor in earth, the sea, nor sky,
In fairy dream nor fancy's eye,
Vision his soul had ever seen
Like MARY STUART, Scotland's queen.

NIGHT THE FIRST.

Hushed was the court—the courtiers gazed—
Each eye was bent, each soul amazed,
To see that group of genuine worth,
Those far-famed minstrels of the north.
So motley wild their garments seemed;
Their eyes, where tints of madness gleamed.
Fired with impatience every breast,
And expectation stood confest.

Short was the pause; the stranger youth,
The gaudy minstrel of the south,
Whose glossy eye and lady form
Had never braved the northern storm,
Stepped lightly forth—kneeled three times low—
And then, with many a smile and bow,
Mounted the form amid the ring,
And rung his harp's responsive string.
Though true the chords, and mellow-toned,
Long, long he twisted, long he conned;
Well pleased to hear his name they knew;
"'Tis Rizzio!" round in whispers flew.

Valet with Parma's knight he came,
An angler in the tides of fame;
And oft had tried, with anxious pain,
Respect of Scotland's queen to gain.
Too well his eye, with searching art,
Perceived her fond, her wareless heart;
And, though unskilled in Scottish song,
Her notice he had woo'd so long,
With pain by night, and care by day,
He framed this fervid, flowery lay.

Malcolm of Lorn.

THE FIRST BARD'S SONG.

Came ye by Ora's verdant steep,
That smiles the restless ocean over?
Heard ye a suffering maiden weep?
Heard ye her name a faithful lover?
Saw ye an aged matron stand
O'er yon green grave above the strand,
Bent like the trunk of withered tree,
Or yon old thorn that sips the sea;
Fixed her dim eye, her face as pale
As the mists that o'er her flew?
Her joy is fled like the flower of the vale,
Her hope like the morning dew.
That matron was lately as proud of her stay,
As the mightiest monarch of sceptre or sway:
O list to the tale! 'tis a tale of soft sorrow,
Of Malcolm of Lorn and young Ann of Glen-Ora.

The sun is sweet at early morn,
Just blushing from the ocean's bosom;
The rose that decks the woodland thorn
Is fairest in its opening blossom;
Sweeter than opening rose in dew,
Than vernal flowers of richest hue,
Than fragrant birch or weeping willow,
Than red sun resting on the billow;
Sweeter than ought to mortals given
The heart and soul to prove;
Sweeter than ought beneath the heaven,
The joys of early love!
Never did maiden and manly youth
Love with such fervour, and love with such truth;
Or pleasures and virtues alternately borrow,
As Malcolm of Lorn and fair Ann of Glen-Ora.

The day is come, the dreaded day,
Must part two loving hearts for ever;
The ship lies rocking in the bay,
The boat comes rippling up the river;
O, happy has the gloaming's eye
In green Glen-Ora's bosom seen them!
But soon shall lands and nations lie,
And angry oceans roll between them.
Yes, they must part, for ever part,
Chill falls the truth on either heart;
For honour, titles, wealth, and state,
In distant lands her sire await.
The maid must with her sire away,
She cannot stay behind;
Straight to the south the pennons play,
And steady is the wind.
Shall Malcolm relinquish the home of his youth,
And sail with his love to the lands of the south!
Ah, no! for his father is gone to the tomb—
One parent survives in her desolate home;
No child but her Malcolm to cheer her lone way;
Break not her fond heart, gentle Malcolm, O stay!

The boat impatient leans ashore,
Her prow sleeps on a sandy pillow;
The rower leans upon his oar,
Already bent to brush the billow.
O! Malcolm, view yon melting eyes,
With tears yon stainless roses steeping;
O! Malcolm, list, thy mother sighs;
She's leaning o'er her staff and weeping.
Thy Anna's heart is bound to thine,
And must that gentle heart repine?
Quick from the shore the boat must fly:
Her soul is speaking through her eye:
Think of thy joys in Ora's shade;
From Anna canst thou sever?
Think of the vows thou often hast made,
To love the dear maiden for ever.
And canst thou forego such beauty and youth,
Such maiden honour and spotless truth?
Forbid it!—He yields; to the boat he draws nigh—
Haste, Malcolm, aboard, and revert not thine eye.
That trembling voice in murmurs weak,
Comes not to blast the hopes before thee;
For pity, Malcolm, turn, and take
A last farewell of her that bore thee.
She says no word to mar thy bliss;
A last embrace, a parting kiss,
Her love deserves;—then be thou gone;
A mother's joys are thine alone.
Friendship may fade, and fortune prove
Deceitful to thy heart;
But never can a mother's love
From her own offspring part.
That tender form, now bent and gray,
Shall quickly sink to her native clay;
Then who shall watch her parting breath,
And shed a tear o'er her couch of death?
Who follow the dust to its long, long home,
And lay that head in an honoured tomb?

Oft hast thou, to her bosom press'd,
For many a day about been borne;
Oft hushed and cradled on her breast,
And canst thou leave that breast forlorn!
O'er all thy ails her heart has bled;
Oft has she watched beside thy bed;
Oft prayed for thee in dell at even,
Beneath the pitying stars of heaven.
Ah! Malcolm, ne'er was parent yet
So tender, so benign:
Never was maid so loved, so sweet,
Nor soul so rent as thine!
He looked to the boat—slow she heaved from the shore;
He saw his loved Anna all speechless implore:
But, grasped by a cold and a trembling hand,
He clung to his parent, and sunk on the strand.
The boat across the tide flew fast,
And left a silver curve behind;
Loud sung the sailor from the mast,
Spreading his sails before the wind.
The stately ship, adown the bay,
A corslet framed of heaving snow,
And flurred on high the slender spray,
Till rainbows gleamed around her prow.
How strained was Malcolm's watery eye,
Yon fleeting vision to descry!
But, ah! her virgin form so fair,
Soon vanished in the liquid air.
Away to Ora's headland steep
The youth retired the while,
And saw the unpitying vessel sweep
Around yon Highland isle.
His heart and his mind with that vessel had gone;
His sorrow was deep, and despairing his moan,
When, lifting his eyes from the green heaving deep,
He prayed the Almighty his Anna to keep.

High o'er the crested cliffs of Lorn
The curlew conned her wild bravura;
The sun, in pall of purple borne,
Was hastening down the steeps of Jura:

The glowing ocean heaved her breast,
Her wandering lover's glances under;
And showed his radiant form, imprest
Deep in a wavy world of wonder.
Not all the ocean's dyes at even,
Though varied as the bow of heaven;
The countless isles so dusky blue,
Nor medley of the gray curlew,
Could light on Malcolm's spirit shed;
Their glory all was gone!
For his joy was fled, his hope was dead,
And his heart forsaken and lone.
The sea-bird sought her roofless nest,
To warm her brood with her downy breast;
And near her home on the margin dun,
A mother weeps o'er her duteous son.

One little boat alone is seen
On all the lovely dappled main.
That softly sinks the waves between,
Then vaults their heaving breasts again.
With snowy sail, and rowers' sweep,
Across the tide she seems to fly:
Why bears she on yon headland steep,
Where neither house nor home is nigh?
Is that a vision from the deep
That springs ashore and scales the steep,
Nor ever stays its ardent haste
Till sunk upon young Malcolm's breast?
Oh! spare that breast so lowly laid,
So fraught with deepest sorrow!
It is his own, his darling maid,
Young Anna of Glen-Ora!—
"My Malcolm, part we ne'er again:
My father saw thy bosom's pain;
Pitied my grief from thee to sever;
Now I, and Glen-Ora, are thine for ever!"

That blaze of joy through clouds of woe,
Too fierce upon his heart did fall;
For, ah! the shaft had left the bow,
Which power of man could not recall.
No word of love could Malcolm speak;
No raptured kiss his lips impart;
No tear bedewed his shivering cheek,
To ease the grasp that held his heart.
His arms essayed one kind embrace—
Will they inclose her? never! never!
A smile set softly on his face,
But ah, the eye was set for ever!
'Twas more than broken heart could brook:
How throbs that breast!—How still that look!
One shiver more! All! all is o'er!—
As melts the wave on level shore;
As fades the dye of falling even,
Far on the silver verge of heaven;
As on thy ear the minstrel's lay,—
So died the comely youth away."

The strain died soft in note of woe,
Nor breath nor whisper 'gan to flow
From courtly circle; all was still
As midnight on the lonely hill.
So well that foreign minstrel's strain
Had mimicked passion, woe, and pain,
Seemed even the chilly hand of death
Stealing away his mellow breath.
So sighed—so stopped—so died his lay,—
His spirit too seemed fled for aye.

'Tis true, the gay attentive throng
Admired, but loved not much, his song;
Admired his wondrous voice and skill,
His harp that thrilled or wept at will;
But that affected gaudy rhyme,
The querulous keys and changing chime,
Scarce could the Highland chieftain brook;
Disdain seemed kindling in his look,
That song so vapid, artful, terse,
Should e'er compete with Scottish verse.

But she, the fairest of the fair,
Who sat enthroned in gilded chair,
Well skilled in foreign minstrelsy
And artful airs of Italy,
Listened his song, with raptures wild,
And on the happy minstrel smiled.
Soon did the wily stranger's eye
The notice most he wished espy,
Then poured his numbers bold and free,
Fired by the grace of majesty;
And when his last notes died away,
When sunk in well-feigned death he lay,
When round the crowd began to ring,
Thinking his spirit on the wing,—
First of the dames she came along,
Wept, sighed, and marvelled 'mid the throng.
And when they raised him, it was said
The beauteous sovereign deigned her aid;
And in her hands, so soft and warm,
Upheld the minstrel's hand and arm.
Then oped his eye with rapture fired;
He smiled, and, bowing oft, retired;
Pleased he so soon had realized
What more than gold or fame he prized.

Next in the list was Gardyn's name:
No sooner called than forth he came.
Stately he strode, nor bow made he,
Nor even a look of courtesy.
The simpering cringe, and fawning look,
Of him who late the lists forsook,
Roused his proud heart, and fired his eye,
That glowed with native dignity.

Full sixty years the bard had seen,
Yet still his manly form and mien,
His garb of ancient Caledon,
Where lines of silk and scarlet shone,
And golden garters 'neath his knee,
Announced no man of mean degree.
Upon his harp, of wondrous frame,
Was carved his lineage and his name;

There stood the cross that name above,
Fair emblem of Almighty love:
Beneath rose an embossment proud,—
A Rose beneath a Thistle bowed.

Lightly upon the form he sprung,
And his bold harp impetuous rung.
Not one by one the chords he tried,
But brushed them o'er from side to side,
With either hand, so rapid, loud,
Shook were the halls of Holyrood.
Then in a mellow tone, and strong,
He poured this wild and dreadful song.

Young Kennedy.

THE SECOND BARD'S SONG.

When the gusts of October had rifled the thorn,
Had dappled the woodland, and umbered the plain,
In den of the mountain was Kennedy born:
There hushed by the tempest, baptized with the rain.
His cradle a mat that swung light on the oak;
His couch the scar mountain-fern, spread on the rock;
The white knobs of ice from the chilled nipple hung,
And loud winter-torrents his lullaby sung.

Unheeded he shivered, unheeded he cried;
Soon died on the breeze of the forest his moan.
To his wailings, the weary wood-echo replied;
His watcher, the wondering redbreast alone.
Oft gazed his young eye on the whirl of the storm,
And all the wild shades that the desert deform;
From cleft in the correi, which thunders had riven,
It oped on the pale fleeting billows of heaven.

The nursling of misery, young Kennedy learned
His hunger, his thirst, and his passions to feed:
With pity for others his heart never yearned—
Their pain was his pleasure—their sorrow his meed.
His eye was the eagle's, the twilight his hue;
His stature like pine of the hill where he grew;
His soul was the neal-fire, inhaled from his den,
And never knew fear, save for ghost of the glen.

His father, a chief for barbarity known,
Proscribed, and by gallant Macdougal expelled;
Where rolls the dark Teith through the valley of Doune,
The conqueror's menial he toiled in the field.
His master he loved not, obeyed with a scowl,
Scarce smothered his hate, and his rancour of soul;
When challenged, his eye and his colour would change,
His proud bosom nursing and planning revenge.

Matilda, ah! woe that the wild rose's dye,
Shed over thy maiden cheek, caused thee to rue!
O! why was the sphere of thy love-rolling eye
Inlaid with the diamond, and dipt in the dew?
Thy father's sole daughter; his hope and his care;
The child of his age, and the child of his prayer;
And thine was the heart that was gentle and kind,
And light as the feather that sports in the wind.

To her home from the Lowlands, Matilda returned;
All fair was her form, and untainted her mind.
Young Kennedy saw her, his appetite burned
As fierce as the moor-flame impelled by the wind.
Was it love? No; the ray his dark soul never knew,
That spark which eternity burns to renew;
'Twas the flash of desire, kindled fierce by revenge,
Which savages feel the brown desert that range.

Sweet woman! too well is thy tenderness known;
Too often deep sorrow succeeds thy love-smile;
Too oft, in a moment, thy peace overthrown—
Fair butt of delusion, of passion, and guile!
What heart will not bleed for Matilda so gay,
To art and to long perseverance a prey?
Why sings yon scared blackbird in sorrowful mood?
Why blushes the daisy deep in the green-wood?

Sweet woman! with virtue, thou'rt lofty, thou'rt free;
Yield that, thou'rt a slave, and the mark of disdain:
No blossom of spring is beleaguered like thee,
Though brushed by the lightning, the wind, and the rain.
Matilda is fallen! With tears in her eye
She seeks her destroyer, but only can sigh.
Matilda has fallen, and sorrow her doom—
The flower of the valley is nipt in the bloom.

Ah! Kennedy, vengeance hangs over thine head!
Escape to thy native Glengary forlorn:[1]
Why art thou at midnight away from thy bed?
Why quakes thy big heart at the break of the morn?
Why chatters yon magpie on gable so loud?
Why flits yon light vision in gossamer shroud?
How came yon white doves from the window to fly,
And hover on weariless wing to the sky?

Yon pie is the prophet of terror and death;
O'er Abel's green arbour that omen was given:
Yon pale boding phantom, a messenger wraith;
Yon doves two fair angels commissioned of Heaven.
The sun is in state, and the reapers in motion;
Why were they not called to their morning devotion?
Why slumbers Macdougal so long in his bed?
Ah! pale on his couch the old chieftain lies dead!

Though grateful the hope to the death-bed that flies,
That lovers and friends o'er our ashes will weep;
The soul, when released from her lingering ties,
In secret may see if their sorrows are deep.

[1] The clan Kennedy was only in the present age finally expelled from Glengary, and forced to scatter over this and other countries. Its character among the Highlanders is that of the most savage and irreclaimable tribe that ever infested the mountains of the north.

Who wept for the worthy Macdougal?—Not one!
His darling Matilda, who, two months agone,
Would have mourned for her father in sorrow extreme,
Indulged in a painful delectable dream.

But, why do the matrons, while dressing the dead,
Sit silent, and look as if something they knew?
Why gaze on the features? Why move they the head,
And point at the bosom so dappled and blue?
Say, was there foul play?—Then why sleeps the red thunder?
Ah! hold, for Suspicion stands silent with wonder.
The body's entombed, and the green turf laid over—
Matilda is wed to her dark Highland lover.

Yes, the new moon that stooped over green Aberfoyle,
And shed her light dews on a father's new grave,
Beheld, in her wane, the gay wedding turmoil,
And lighted the bride to her chamber at eve:
Blue, blue was the heaven; and, o'er the wide scene,
A vapoury silver veil floated serene,
A fairy perspective, that bore from the eye
Wood, mountain, and meadow, in distance to lie.

The scene was so still, it was all like a vision;
The lamp of the moon seemed as fading for ever:
'Twas awfully soft, without shade or elision;
And nothing was heard but the rush of the river.
But why won't the bride-maidens walk on the lea,
Nor lovers steal out to the sycamore tree?
Why turn to the hall with those looks of confusion?
There's nothing abroad!—'tis a dream!—a delusion!

But why do the horses snort over their food,
And cling to the manger in seeming dismay?
What scares the old owlet afar to the wood?
Why screams the blue heron as hastening away?
Say, why is the dog hid so deep in his cover?
Each window barred up, and the curtain drawn over!
Each white maiden bosom still heaving so high,
And fixed on another each fear-speaking eye?

'Tis all an illusion! the lamp let us trim;
Come, rouse thee, old minstrel, to strains of renown;
The old cup is empty, fill round to the brim,
And drink the young pair to their chamber just gone.
Ha! why is the cup from the lip ta'en away?
Why fixed every form like a statue of clay?
Say, whence is that outcry of horrid despair?
Haste, fly to the marriage bed-chamber—'tis there!

O! haste thee, Strath-Allan, Glen Ogle, away,
These outcries betoken wild horror and woe;
The dull ear of midnight is stunned with dismay;
Glen-Ogle! Strath-Allan! fly swift as the roe.
'Mid darkness and death, on eternity's brim,
You stood with Macdonald and Arch'bald the Grim;
Then why do you hesitate? why do you stand
With claymore unsheathed, and red taper in hand?

The tumult is o'er; not a murmur nor groan:
What footsteps so madly pace through the saloon?
'Tis Kennedy, naked and ghastly, alone,
Who hies him away by the light of the moon.
All prostrate and bleeding, Matilda they found,
The threshold her pillow, her couch the cold ground;
Her features distorted, her colour the clay,
Her feelings, her voice, and her reason away.

Ere morn they returned; but how well had they never!
They brought with them horror too deep to sustain;
Returned but to chasten, and vanish for ever,
To harrow the bosom and fever the brain.
List, list to her tale, youth, levity, beauty;—
O! sweet is the path of devotion and duty!—
When pleasure smiles sweetest, dread danger and death.
And think of Matilda, the flower of the Teith.

The Bride's Tale.

I had just laid me down, but no word could I pray;
I had pillowed my head, and drawn up the bed-cover;
I thought of the grave where my loved father lay
So damp and so cold, with the grass growing over.
I looked to my husband; but just as he came
To enter my couch, it seemed all in a flame,
A ghastly refulgence as bright as day-noon,
Though shut was the chamber from eye of the moon.

Bestower of being! in pity, O! hide
That sight from the eye of my spirit for ever;
That page from the volume of memory divide,
Or memory and being eternally sever!
My father approached; our bed-curtains he drew;
Ah! well the gray locks and pale features I knew;
I saw his fix'd eye-balls indignantly glow;
Yet still in that look there were pity and woe.

"O! hide thee, my daughter," he eagerly cried;
"O haste from the bed of that parricide lover!
Embrace not thy husband, unfortunate bride,
Thy red cup of misery already runs over.
He strangled thy father; thy guilt paved the way;
Thy heart yet is blameless, O, fly while you may!
Thy portion of life must calamity leaven;
But fly while there's hope of forgiveness from Heaven.

"And thou, fell destroyer of virtue and life,
O! well mayst thou quake at thy terrible doom;
For body or soul, with barbarity rife,
On earth is no refuge, in heaven no room.
Fly whither thou wilt, I will follow thee still,
To dens of the forest, or mists of the hill;
The task I'm assigned, which I'll never forego,
But chase thee from earth to thy dwelling below.

"The cave shall not cover, the cloud shall not hide thee;
At noon I will wither thy sight with my frown:
In gloom of the night I will lay me beside thee,
And pierce with this weapon thy bosom of stone."
Fast fled the despoiler with howlings most dire,
Fast followed the spirit with rapier of fire;
Away, and away, through the silent saloon,
And away, and away, by the light of the moon.

To follow I tried, but sunk down at the door,
Alas! from that trance that I ever awoke!
How wanders my mind! I shall see him no more,
Till God shall yon gates everlasting unlock.
My poor brow is open; 'tis burning with pain;
O kiss it, sweet vision! O kiss it again!
Now give me thine hand; I will fly! I will fly!
Away, on the morn's dappled wing, to the sky.

The Conclusion.

O! shepherd of Braco, look well to thy flock,
The piles of Glen-Ardochy murmur and jar;
The rook and the raven converse from the rock,
The beasts of the forest are howling afar.
Shrill pipes the goss-hawk his dire tidings to tell,
The gray mountain-falcon accords with his yell;
Aloft on bold pinion the eagle is borne,
To ring the alarm at the gates of the morn.

Ah! shepherd, thy kids wander safe in the wood,
Thy lambs feed in peace on Ben-Ardochy's brow;
Then why is the hoary cliff sheeted with blood?
And what the poor carcass lies mangled below?
Oh, hie thee away to thy hut at the fountain,
And dig a lone grave on the top of yon mountain;
But fly it for ever when falls the gray gloaming,
For there a grim phantom still naked is roaming.

Gardyn with stately step withdrew,
While plaudits round the circle flew.

Woe that the bard, whose thrilling song
Has poured from age to age along,
Should perish from the lists of fame,
And lose his only boon—a name.
Yet many a song of wondrous power,
Well known in cot and green-wood bower,
Wherever swells the shepherd's reed
On Yarrow's banks and braes of Tweed;
Yes, many a song of olden time,
Of rude array, and air sublime,
Though long on time's dark whirlpool tossed,
The song is saved, the bard is lost.

Yet have I weened, when these I sung
On Ettrick banks, while mind was young;
When on the eve their strains I threw,
And youths and maidens round me drew;
Or chanted in the lonely glen,
Far from the haunts and eyes of men.
Yes, I have weened, with fondest sigh,
The spirit of the bard was nigh;
Swung by the breeze on braken pile,
Or hovering o'er me with a smile.
Would fancy still her dreams combine,
That spirit, too, might breathe on mine;
Well pleased to see her songs the joy
Of that poor lonely shepherd boy.

'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
That many rhymes which still prevail,
Of genuine ardour, bold and free,
Were aye admired, and aye will be,
Had never been, or shortly stood,
But for that Wake at Holyrood.
Certes that many a bard of name,
Who there appeared and strove for fame,
No record names, nor minstrel's tongue;
Not even are known the lays they sung.

The fifth was from a western shore,
Where rolls the dark and sullen Orr:
Of peasant make, and doubtful mein,
Affecting airs of proud disdain.
Wide curled his raven locks and high;
Dark was his visage, dark his eye,
That glanced around on dames and men,
Like falcon's on the cliffs of Ken.
Some ruffian mendicant, whose wit
Presumed at much, for all unfit.
No one could read the character,
If *knave* or *genius* writ was there;
But all supposed, from mein and frame,
From Erin he an exile came.

With hollow voice, and harp ill strung,
Some bungling parody he sung,
Well known to maid and matron gray,
Through all the glens of Galloway;
For often had he conned it there,
With simpering and affected air.
Listened the Court, with sidelong bend,
In wonder how the strain would end.
But long ere that it grew so plain,
They scarce from hooting could refrain;
And each to others 'gan to say,
"What good can come from Galloway!"

Woe for the *man* so indiscreet!
For bard would be a name unmeet
For self-sufficient sordid elf,
Whom none admires but he himself.
Unheard by him the scorner's tongue,
For still he capered and he sung,
With many an awkward gape the while,
And many a dark delighted smile,
Till round the throne the murmurs ran;
Till ladies blushed behind the fan;
And when the rustic ceased to sing,
A hiss of scorn ran round the ring.
Dark grinned the fool around the form,
With blood-shot eye, and face of storm;

Sprung from his seat with awkward leap,
And muttered curses dark and deep.

The sixth, too, from that country he,
Where heath-cocks bay o'er western Dee;
Where Summer spreads her purple screen
O'er moors where greensward ne'er was seen;
Nor shade, o'er all the prospect stern,
Save crusted rock, or warrior's cairn.

Gentle his form, his manners meet,
His harp was soft, his voice was sweet;
He sung Lochryan's hapless maid,
In bloom of youth by love betrayed;
Turned from her lover's bower at last,
To brave the chilly midnight blast;
And bitterer far, the pangs to prove
Of ruined fame, and slighted love;
A tender babe, her arms within,
Sobbing and "shivering at the chin."
No lady's cheek in court was dry,
So softly poured the melody.

The eighth was from the Leven coast:
The rest who sung that night are lost.

Mounted the bard of Fife on high,
Bushy his beard, and wild his eye:
His cheek was furrowed by the gale,
And his thin locks were long and pale.
Full hardly passed he through the throng,
Dragging on crutches, slow along,
His feeble and unhealthy frame,
And kindness welcomed as he came.
His unpresuming aspect mild,
Calm and benignant as a child,
Yet spoke to all that viewed him nigh,
That more was there than met the eye:
Some wizard of the shore he seemed,
Who through the scenes of life had dreamed,
Of spells that vital life benumb,
Of formless spirits wandering dumb,
Where aspens in the moonbeam quake,
By mouldering pile, or mountain lake.

He deemed that fays and spectres wan
Held converse with the thoughts of man;
In dreams their future fates foretold,
And spread the death-flame on the wold;
Or flagged at eve each restless wing
In dells their vesper hymns to sing.

Such was our bard, such were his lays:
And long, by green Benarty's base,
His wild wood-notes, from ivy cave,
Had waked the dawning from the wave.
At evening fall, in lonesome dale,
He kept strange converse with the gale;
Held worldly pomp in high derision,
And wandered in a world of vision.

Of mountain ash his harp was framed:
The brazen chords all trembling flamed,
As, in a rugged northern tongue,
This mad unearthly song he sung.

The Witch of Fife.

THE EIGHTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

"Quhare haif ye been, ye ill womyne,
These three lang nightis fra hame?
Quhat garris the sweit drap fra yer brow,
Like clotis of the saut sea faem?

"It fearis me muckil ye haif seen
Quhat guid man never knew;
It fearis me muckil ye haif been
Quhare the gray cock never crew.

"But the spell may crack, and the brydel breck,
Then sherpe yer werde will be;
Ye had better sleipe in yer bed at hame,
Wi' yer deire littil bairnis and me."—

'Sit doune, sit doune, my leil auld man,
Sit doune, and listin to me;
I'll gar the hayre stand on yer crown,
And the cauld sweit blind yer ee.

'But tell nae wordis, my guid auld man,
Tell never word again;
Or deire shall be yer courtisye,
And driche and sair yer pain.

'The first leet night, quhan the new moon set,
Quhan all was douffe and mirk,
We saddled ouir naigis wi' the moon-fern leif,
And rode fra Kilmerrin kirk.

'Some horses ware of the brume-cow framit,
And some of the greine bay tree;
But mine was made of ane humloke schaw,
And a stout stallion was he.

'We raide the tod doune on the hill,
The martin on the law;
And we huntyd the hoolet out of brethe,
And forcit him doune to fa'.—

"Quhat guid was that, ye ill womyne?
Quhat guid was that to thee?
Ye wald better haif been in yer bed at hame,
Wi' yer deire littil bairnis and me."—

'And aye we raide, and se merrily we raide,
Throw the merkist gloffis of the night;
And we swam the floode, and we darnit the woode,
Till we cam to the Lommond height.

[1] It may suffice to mention, once for all, that the catastrophe of this tale, as well as the principal events related in the tales of "Old David," and "M'Gregor," are all founded on popular traditions. So is also the romantic story of Kilmeny's disappearance and revisiting her friends, after being seven years in Fairyland. The tradition bears some resemblance to the old ballads of "Tam Lean," and "Thomas of Erceldon;" and it is not improbable that all the three may have drawn their origin from the same ancient romance.

'And quhan we cam to the Lommond height,
Se lythlye we lychtid doune;
And we drank fra the hornis that never grew,
The beer that was never brewin.

'Then up there raise ane wee wee man,
Fra neithe the moss-gray stane;
His fece was wan like the collifloure,
For he nouthir had blude nor bane.

'He set ane reid-pipe til his muthe,
And he playit se bonnilye,
Till the gray curlew and the black-cock flew
To listen his melodye.

'It rang se sweit through the grein Lommond,
That the nycht-winde lowner blew;
And it soupit alang the Loch Leven,
And wakinit the white sea-mew.

'It rang se sweit through the grein Lommond,
Se sweitly butt and se shill,
That the wezilis laup out of their mouldy holis,
And dancit on the mydnycht hill.

'The corby craw cam gledgin near,
The ern gede veeryng bye;
And the troutis laup out of the Leven Loch,
Charmit with the melodye.

'And aye we dancit on the grein Lommond,
Till the dawn on the ocean grew:
Ne wonder I was a weary wycht
Quhan I cam hame to you.'—

"Quhat guid, quhat guid, my weird weird wyfe,
Quhat guid was that to thee!
Ye wald better haif bein in yer bed at hame,
Wi' yer deire littil bairnis and me."—

'The second nycht, quhan the new moon set,
O'er the roaryng sea we flew;
The cockle-shell our trusty bark,
Our sailis of the grein sea-rue.

'And the bauld windis blew, and the fire-flauchtis flew,
And the sea ran to the skie:
And the thunner it growlit, and the sea-dogs howlit,
As we gaed scouryng bye.

'And aye we mountit the sea-grein hillis,
Quhill we brushit thro' the cludis of the hevin;
Than sousit downright like the stern-shot light,
Fra the liftis blue casement driven.

'But our taickil stood, and our bark was good,
And se pang was our pearily prowe;
Quhan we culdna speil the brow of the wavis,
We needilit them throu belowe.

'As fast as the hail, as fast as the gale,
As fast as the mydnycht leme,
We borit the breiste of the burstyng swale,
Or fluflit i' the flotyng faem.

'And quhan to the Norraway shore we wan,
We muntyd our steedis of the wynde,
And we splashit the floode, and we darnit the woode,
And we left the shonir behynde.

'Fleit is the roe on the grein Lommond,
And swift is the couryng grew;
The rein-deir dun can eithly run,
Quhan the houndis and the hornis pursue.

'But nowther the roe, nor the rein-deir dun,
The hinde nor the couryng grew,
Culde fly owr montaine, muir, and dale,
As our braw steedis they flew.

'The dales war deep, and the Doffrinis steep,
And we raise to the skyis ee-bree;
Quhite, quhite was our rode, that was never trode,
Owr the snawis of eternity!

'And quhan we cam to the Lapland lone,
The fairies war all in array;
For all the genii of the north
War keipyng their holiday.

'The warlock men and the weird wemyng,
And the fays of the wood and the steip,
And the phantom hunteris all war there,
And the mermaidis of the deip.

'And they washit us all with the witch-water,
Distillit fra the muirland dew,
Quhill our beauty blumit like the Lapland rose,
That wylde in the foreste grew.'—

"Ye lee, ye lee, ye ill womyne,
Se loud as I heir ye lee!
For the warst-faurd wyfe on the shoris of Fyfe
Is cumlye comparit wi' thee."—

'Then the mermaidis sang and the woodlandis rang,
Se sweitly swellit the quire;
On every cliff a herpe they hang,
On every tree a lyre.

'And aye they sang, and the woodlandis rang,
And we drank, and we drank se deip;
Then saft in the armis of the warlock men,
We laid us dune to sleip.'—

"Away, away, ye ill womyne,
An ill deide met ye dee!
Quhan ye hae pruvit se false to yer God,
Ye can never pruve true to me."—

'And there we learnit fra the fairy foke,
And fra our master true,
The wordis that can beire us throu the air,
And lokkis and barris undo.

'Last nycht we met at Maisry's cot;
Richt weil the wordis we knew;
And we set a foot on the black cruik-shell,
And out at the lum we flew.

'And we flew owr hill, and we flew owr dale,
And we flew owr firth an sea,
Until we eam to merry Carlisle,
Quhare we lightit on the lea.

'We gaed to the vault beyond the towr,
Quhare we enterit frec as ayr;
And we drank, and we drank of the bishopis wyne
Quhill we culde drynk ne mair.'—

"Gin that be true, my guid auld wyfe,
Whilk thou hast tauld to me,
Betide my death, betide my lyfe,
I'll beire thee companye.

"Neist time ye gaung to merry Carlisle
To drynk of the blude-reid wyne,
Beshrew my heart, I'll fly with thee,
If the deil should fly behynde."—

Ah! little do ye ken, my silly auld man,
The daingeris we maun dree;
Last nychte we drank of the bishopis wyne,
Quhill near near taen war we.

'Afore we wan to the Sandy Ford.
The gor-cockis nichering flew;
The lofty crest of Ettrick Pen
Was wavit about with blue,
And, flichtering throu the ayr, we fand
The chill chill mornyng dew.

'As we flew owr the hillis of Braid,
The sun raise fair and cleir;
There gurly James, and his baronis braw,
War out to hunt the deir.

'Their bowis they drew, their arrowis flew,
And piercit the ayr with speide,
Quhill purpil fell the mornyng dew
Wi' witch-blude rank and reide.

'Littil do ye ken, my silly auld man,
The daingeris we maun dree;
Ne wonder I am a weary wycht
Quhan I come hame to thee.'—

"But tell me the *word*, my guid auld wyfe,
Come tell it me speedilye;
For I lang to drynk of the guid reide wyne,
And to wyng the ayr with thee.

"Yer hellish horse I wilna ryde,
Nor sail the seas in the wynde;
But I can flee as weil as thee,
And I'll drynk quhill ye be blynd."—

O fy! O fy! my leil auld man,
That word I darena tell;
It wald turn this warld all upside down,
And make it warse than hell.

'For all the lassies in the land
Wald munt the wynde and fly;
And the men wald doff their doublets syde,
And after them wald ply.'—

But the auld guidman was ane cunnyng auld man,
And ane cunnyng auld man was he;
And he watchit, and he watchit for mony a nychte,
The witches' flychte to see.

Ane nychte he darnit in Maisry's cot;
The fearless haggs eam in;
And he heard the word of awsome weird,
And he saw their deidis of synn.

Then ane by ane they said that word,
As fast to the fire they drew;
Then set a foot on the black cruik-shell,
And out at the lum they flew.

The auld guidman eam fra his hole
With feire and muckil dreide,
But yet he culdna think to rue,
For the wyne eam in his head.

He set his foot in the black cruik-shell,
With ane fixit and ane wawlying ee;
And he said the word that I darena say,
And out at the lum flew he.

The witches skalit the moonbeam pale;
Deep groanit the trembling wynde;
But they never wist till our auld guidman
Was hoveryng them behynde.

They flew to the vaultis of merry Carlisle,
Quhare they enterit free as ayr;
And they drank and they drank of the bishopis wyne
Quhill they culde drynk ne mair.

The auld guidman he grew se crouse,
He danoit on the mouldy ground,
And he sang the bonniest sangs of Fyfe,
And he tuzzlit the kerlyngs round.

And aye he piercit the tither butt,
And he suckit, and he suckit se lang,
Quhill his een they closit, and his voice grew low,
And his tongue wald hardly gang.

The kerlyngs drank of the bishopis wyne
Quhill they scentit the morning wynde;
Then clove again the yielding ayr,
And left the auld man behynde.

And aye he sleipit on the damp damp floor,
He sleipit and he snorit amain;
He never dreamit he was far fra hame,
Or that the auld wyvis war gane.

And aye he sleipit on the damp damp floor,
Quhill past the mid-day highte,
Quhan wakenit by five rough Englishmen
That trailit him to the lychte.

"Now quha are ye, ye silly auld man,
That sleipis se sound and se weil?
Or how gat ye into the bishopis vault
Throu lokkis and barris of steel?"

The auld gudeman he tryit to speak,
But ane word he culdna fynde;
He tryit to think, but his head whirlit round,
And ane thing he culdna mynde:—
"I cam fra Fyfe," the auld man cryit,
"And I cam on the mydnycht wynde."

They nickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld man,
And they yerkit his limbis with twine,
Quhill the reide blude ran in his hose and shoon,
But some cryit it was wyne.

They lickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld man,
And they tyit him till ane stone;
And they set ane bele-fire him about,
To burn him skin and bone.

"O wae to me!" said the puir auld man,
"That ever I saw the day!
And wae be to all the ill wemyng
That lead puir men astray!

"Let nevir ane auld man after this
To lawless greide inclyne;
Let nevir ane auld man after this
Rin post to the deil for wyne."

The reike flew up in the auld manis face,
And choukit him bitterlye;
And the lowe cam up with ane angry blese,
And it syngit his auld breek-knee.

He lukit to the land fra whence he cam,
For lukis he culde get nae mae;
And he thochte of his deire littil bairnis at hame,
And O the auld man was wae!

But they turnit their facis to the sun,
With gloffe and wonderous glair,
For they saw ane thing beth lairge and dun,
Comin swaipin down the ayr.

That burd it cam fra the landis o' Fyfe,
And it cam rycht tymeouslye,
For quha was it but the auld manis wyfe,
Just comit his dethe to see?

Scho put ane reide cap on his heide,
And the auld guidman lookit fain,
Then whisperit ane word intil his lug,
And tovit to the ayr again.

The auld guidman he gae ane bob,
I' the mids o' the burnyng lowe;
And the sheklis that band him to the ring,
They fell fra his armis like towe.

He drew his breath, and he said the word,
And he said it with muckil glee,
Then set his fit on the burnyng pile,
And away to the ayr flew he.

Till aince he clerit the swirlyng reike,
He lukit beth ferit and sad;
But whan he wan to the lycht blue ayr,
He lauchit as he'd been mad.

His armis war spred, and his heid was hiche,
And his feite stack out behynde;
And the laibies of the auld manis cote
War wauffing in the wynde.

And aye he neicherit, and aye he flew,
For he thochte the ploy se raire;
It was like the voice of the gainder blue,
Quhan he flees throu the ayr.

He lukit back to the Carlisle men
As he borit the norlan sky;
He noddit his heide, and gae ane girn,
But he nevir said guid-bye.

They vanisht far i' the liftis blue wale,
Ne mair the English saw,
But the auld manis lauch cam on the gale,
With a lang and a loud gaffa.

May ever ilke man in the land of Fyfe
Read what the drinkeris dree;
And nevir curse his puir auld wife,
Rychte wicked altho scho be.

When ceased the minstrel's crazy song,
His heedful glance embraced the throng,
And found the smile of free delight
Dimpling the cheeks of ladies bright.
Ah! never yet was bard unmoved,
When beauty smiled or birth approved!
For though his song he holds at nought—
"An idle strain! a passing thought!"
Child of the soul! 'tis held more dear
Than aught by mortals valued here.

When Leven's bard the Court had viewed,
His eye, his vigour was renewed.
No, not the evening's closing eye,
Veiled in the rainbow's deepest dye,
By summer breezes lulled to rest,
Cradled on Leven's silver breast,
Or slumbering on the distant sea,
Imparted sweeter ecstasy.

Nor even the angel of the night,
Kindling his holy sphere of light,
Afar upon the heaving deep,
To light a world of peaceful sleep,
Though in her beam night spirits glanced,
And lovely fays in circles danced,
Or rank by rank rode lightly by,—
Was sweeter to our minstrel's eye.

Unheard the bird of morning crew;
Unheard the breeze of Ocean blew;
The night unweened had passed away,
And dawning ushered in the day.

The Queen's young maids, of cherub hue,
Aside the silken curtains drew,
And lo, the Night, in still profound,
In fleece of heaven had clothed the ground,
And still her furs, so light and fair,
Floated along the morning air.
Low stooped the pine amid the wood,
And the tall cliffs of Salisbury stood
Like marble columns bent and riven,
Propping a pale and frowning heaven.

The Queen bent from her gilded chair,
And waved her hand with graceful air:—
"Break up the court, my lords; away,
And use the day as best you may,
In sleep, in love, or wassail cheer;
The day is dark, the evening near—
Say, will you grace my halls the while,
And in the dance the day beguile?
Break up the court, my lords; away,
And use the day as best you may.
Give order that my minstrels true
Have royal fare and honours due;
And warned by evening's bugle shrill,
We meet to judge their minstrel skill."

Whether that Royal Wake gave birth
To days of sleep and nights of mirth,
Which kings and courtiers still approve,
Which sages blame, and ladies love,
Imports not;—but our courtly throng
(That chapel Wake being kept so long)
Slept out the lowering short-lived days,
And heard by night their native lays,
Till fell the eve of Christmas good,
The dedication of the rood.

Ah me! at routs and revels gay,
Reproach of this unthrifty day,
Though none amongst the dames or men
Rank higher than a citizen,
In chair or chariot all are borne,
Closed from the piercing eye of morn.
But then, though dawning blasts were keen,
Scotland's high dames you might have seen,
Ere from the banquet hall they rose,
Shift their laced shoes and silken hose;
Their broidered kirtles round them throw,
And wade their way through wreaths of snow,
Leaning on lord or lover's arm,
Cheerful and reckless of all harm.
Vanished those hardy times outright;
So is our ancient Scottish might.

Sweet be her home, admired her charms,
Bliss to her couch in lover's arms,
I bid in every minstrel's name,
I bid to every lovely dame,
That ever gave one hour away
To cheer the bard or list his lay!

To all who love the raptures high
Of Scottish song and minstrelsy,
Till next the night, in sable shroud,
Shall wrap the halls of Holyrood,
That rival minstrels' songs I borrow
I bid a hearty kind good-morrow.

NIGHT THE SECOND.

Scarce fled the dawning's dubious gray,
So transient was that dismal day:
The lurid vapours, dense and stern,
Unpierced save by the crusted cairn,
In tenfold shroud the heavens deform;
While far within the brooding storm
Travelled the sun in lonely blue,
And noontide wore a twilight hue.

The sprites that through the welkin wing,
That light and shade alternate bring,
That wrap the eve in dusky veil,
And weave the morning's purple rail;
From pendent clouds of deepest grain,
Shed that dull twilight o'er the main.
Each spire, each tower, and cliff sublime,
Were hooded in the wreathy rime:
And all, ere fell the murk of even,
Were lost within the folds of heaven.
It seemed as if the welkin's breast
Had bowed upon the world to rest;
As heaven and earth to close began,
And seal the destiny of man.

The supper bell at court had rung:
The mass was said, the vesper sung;
In true devotion's sweetest mood,
Beauty had kneeled before the rood;
But all was done in secret guise,
Close from the zealot's searching eyes.

Then burst the bugle's lordly peal
Along the earth's incumbent veil;
Swam on the cloud and lingering shower,
To festive hall and lady's bower;
And found its way, with rapid boom,
To rocks far curtained in the gloom,
And waked their viewless bugle's strain,
That sung the softened notes again.

Upsprung the maid from her love-dream;
The matron from her silken seam;
The abbot from his holy shrine;
The chiefs and warriors from their wine:
For aye the bugle seemed to say,
"The Wake's begun! away, away!"

Fast poured they in, all fair and boon,
Till crowded was the grand saloon;
And scarce was left a little ring,
In which the rival bards might sing.
First in the list that night to play,
Was Farquhar, from the hills of Spey:
A gay and comely youth was he,
And seemed of noble pedigree.
Well known to him Loch-Avin's shore,
And all the dens of dark Glen-More;
Where oft, amid his roving clan,
His shaft had pierced the ptarmigan;
And oft the dun deer's velvet side
That winged shaft had ruthless dyed.
Had struck the heath-cock whirring high,
And brought the eagle from the sky;
And he had dragged the scaly brood
From every Highland lake and flood.

Amid those scenes the youth was bred,
Where nature's eye is stern and dread;
'Mid forests dark, and caverns wild,
And mountains above mountains piled,
Whose hoary summits, tempest-riven,
Uprear eternal snows to heaven.
In Cumbria's dells he too had staid,
Raving like one in trance that's laid,
Of things which Nature gave not birth;
Of heavenly damsels born of earth;
Of pestilence and charnel den;
Of ships and seas, and souls of men:
A moon-struck youth, by all confest,
The dreamer of the watery west.
His locks were fair as sunny sky;
His cheek was ruddy, bright his eye;
His speech was like the music's voice
Mixed with the cataract's swaying noise;
His harp-strings sounded wild and deep,
With lulling swell and lordly sweep.

Aloof from battle's fierce alarms,
Prone his young mind to music's charms:
The cliffs and woods of dark Glen-More
He taught to chant in mystic lore;
For well he weened, by tarn and hill,
Kind viewless spirits wandered still;
And fondly trowed the groups to spy,
Listening his cliff-born melody.
On Leven's bard with scorn he looked,
His homely song he scarcely brooked;
But proudly mounting on the form,
Thus sung *The Spirit of the Storm.*

Glen-Avin.

THE NINTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

Beyond the grizzly cliffs which guard
The infant rills of Highland Dee,
Where hunter's horn was never heard,
Nor bugle of the forest bee;

'Mid wastes that dern and dreary lie,
One mountain rears his mighty form:
Disturbs the moon in passing by,
And smiles above the thunder-storm.

There Avin spreads her ample deep,
To mirror cliffs that brush the Wain;
Whose frigid eyes eternal weep,
In summer suns and autumn rain.

There matin hymn was never sung;
Nor vesper, save the plover's wail;
But mountain eagles breed their young,
And aerial spirits ride the gale.

An hoary sage once lingered there,
Intent to prove some mystic scene;
Though cavern deep, and forest sere,
Had whooped November's boisterous reign.

That noontide fell so stern and still,
The breath of nature seemed away;
The distant sigh of mountain rill
Alone disturbed that solemn day.

Oft had that seer, at break of morn,
Beheld the Fahm glide o'er the fell:[2]
And 'neath the new moon's silver horn,
The fairies dancing in the dell;

Had seen the spirits of the glen,
In every form that Ossian knew;
And wailings heard for living men,
Were never more the light to view.

[1] There are many scenes among the Grampian deserts which amaze the traveller who ventures to explore them; and in the most pathless wastes the most striking landscapes are often concealed. Glen-Avin exceeds them all in what may be termed stern and solemn grandeur. It is indeed a sublime solitude, in which the principal feature is deformity; yet that deformity is mixed with lines of wild beauty, such as an extensive lake with its islets and bays, the straggling trees, and the spots of shaded green; and, altogether, it is such a scene as man has rarely looked upon. I spent a summer day in visiting it. The hills were clear of mist, yet the heavens were extremely dark—the effect upon the scene exceeded all description. My mind, during the whole day, experienced the same sort of sensation as if I had been in a dream; and on returning from the excursion, I did not wonder at the superstition of the neighbouring inhabitants, who believe it to be the summer haunt of innumerable tribes of fairies, and many other spirits, some of whom seem to be the most fantastic, and to behave in the most eccentric manner, of any I ever before heard of. Though the glen is upwards of twenty miles in length, and of prodigious extent, it contains no human habitation. It lies in the west corner of Banffshire, in the very middle of the Grampian Hills.

[2] Fahm is a little ugly monster, who frequents the summits of the mountains around Glen-Avin. My guide, D. M'Queen, declared that he had himself seen him; and by his description, Fahm appears to be no native of this world, but an occasional visitant, whose intentions are evil and dangerous. He is only seen about the break of day, and on the highest verge of the mountain. His head is twice as large as his whole body beside; and if any living creature cross the track over which he has passed before the sun shine upon it, certain death is the consequence. The head of that person or animal instantly begins to swell, grows to an immense size, and finally bursts. Such a disease is really incident to sheep on these heights, and in several parts of the kingdom, where the grounds are elevated to a great height above the sea; but in no place save Glen-Avin is Fahm blamed for it.

But, ah! that dull foreboding day,
He saw what mortal could not bear;
A sight that scared the erne away,
And drove the wild deer from his lair.

Firm in his magic ring he stood,
When, lo! aloft on gray Cairngorm,
A form appeared that chilled his blood,—
The giant Spirit of the Storm.

His face was like the spectre wan,
Slow gliding from the midnight isle:
His stature, on the mighty plan
Of smoke-tower o'er the burning pile.

Red, red and grisly were his eyes;
His cap the moon-cloud's silver gray;
His staff the writhed snake, that lies
Pale, bending o'er the milky way.

He cried, "Away, begone, begone!
Half-naked, hoary, feeble form!
How dar'st thou seek my realms alone,
And brave the Angel of the Storm?"

"And who art thou," the seer replied,
"That bear'st destruction on thy brow?
Whose eye no mortal can abide;
Dread mountain Spirit! what art thou?"

"Within this desert, dank and lone,
Since rolled the world a shoreless sea.
I've held my elemental throne,
The terror of thy race and thee.

"I wrap the sun of heaven in blood,
Veiling his orient beams of light;
And hide the moon in sable shroud,
Far in the alcove of the night.

"I ride the red-bolt's rapid wing,
High on the sweeping whirlwind sail,
And list to hear my tempests sing
Around Glen-Avin's ample vale.

"These everlasting hills are riven;
Their reverend heads are bald and gray;
The Greenland waves salute the heaven,
And quench the burning stars with spray.

"Who was it reared those whelming waves?
Who scalped the brows of old Cairngorm?
And scooped these ever-yawning caves?
'Twas I—the Spirit of the Storm!

"And hence shalt thou, for evermore,
Be doomed to ride the blast with me;
To shriek, amid the tempest's roar,
By fountain, ford, and forest tree."

The wizard cowered him to the earth,
And orisons of dread began;
"Hence, Spirit of infernal birth!
Thou enemy of God and man!"

He waved his sceptre north away,
The arctic ring was rift asunder:
And through the heaven the startling bray
Burst louder than the loudest thunder.

The feathery clouds, condensed and curled,
In columns swept the quaking glen;
Destruction down the dale was hurled,
O'er bleating flocks and wondering men.

The Grampians groaned beneath the storm,
New mountains o'er the correis leaned;
Ben-Nevis shook his shaggy form,
And wondered what his sovereign meaned.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,
The shepherd paused in dumb dismay;
There passing shrieks adown the vale
Lured many a pitying hind away.[1]

The Lowthers felt the tyrant's wrath:
Proud Hartfell quaked beneath his brand;
And Cheviot heard the cries of death
Guarding his loved Northumberland.

But, O! as fell that fateful night,
What horrors Avin wilds deform,
And choke the ghastly lingering light!
There whirled the vortex of the storm.

Ere morn the wind grew deadly still,
And dawning in the air updrew
From many a shelve and shining hill,
Her folding robe of fairy blue.

[1] It was reckoned a curious and unaccountable circumstance, that, during the time of a great fall of snow by night, a cry, as of a person who had lost his way in the storm, was heard along the vale of Ettrick from its head to its foot. What was the people's astonishment, when it was authenticated, that upwards of twenty parties had all been out with torches, lanterns, &c., at the same hour of the night, calling and searching after some unknown person, whom they believed perishing in the snow, and that none of them had discovered any such person. The word spread; the circumstances were magnified—and the consternation became general. The people believed that a whole horde of evil spirits had been abroad in the valley, endeavouring to lure them abroad to their destruction—there was no man sure of his life! Prayers and thanksgivings were offered up to Heaven in every hamlet, and resolutions unanimously formed, that no man perishing in the snow should ever be looked after again as long as the world stood.—When the astonishment had somewhat subsided, and the tale of horror spread too wide ever to be recalled, a lad, without the smallest reference to the phenomenon, chanced to mention, that on the night of the storm, when he was out on the hill turning his sheep to some shelter, a flock of swans passed over his head toward the western sea, which was a sure signal of severe weather; and that at intervals they were always shouting and answering one another, in an extraordinary, and rather fearful, manner.—It was an unfortunate discovery, and marred the harmony of many an evening's conversation! In whatever cot the circumstance was mentioned, the old shepherds rose and went out—the younkers, who had listened to the prayers with reverence and fear, bit their lips—the matrons plied away at their wheels in silence—it was singular that none of them should have known the voice of a swan from that of the devil! They were very angry with the lad, and regarded him as a sort of blasphemer.

Then, what a smooth and wondrous scene
Hung o'er Loch-Avin's lonely breast!
Not top of tallest pine was seen,
On which the dazzled eye could rest;

But mitred cliff, and crested fell,
In lucid curls her brows adorn;
Aloft the radiant crescents swell
All pure as robes by angels worn.

Sound sleeps our seer, far from the day,
Beneath yon sleek and wreathed cone!
His spirit steals, unmissed away,
And dreams across the desert lone.

Sound sleeps our seer! the tempests rave,
And cold sheets o'er his bosom fling;
The moldwarp digs his mossy grave;
His requiem Avin's eagles sing.

Why howls the fox above yon wreath
That mocks the blazing summer sun?
Why croaks the sable bird of death,
As hovering o'er yon desert dun?

When circling years have passed away,
And summer blooms in Avin-Glen,
Why stands yon peasant in dismay,
Still gazing o'er the bloated den?

Green grows the grass; the bones are white,
Not bones of mountain stag they seem:
There hooted once the owl by night,
Above the dead-light's lambent beam.

See yon lone cairn, so gray with age,
Above the base of proud Cairngorm:[1]
There lies the dust of Avin's sage,
Who raised the Spirit of the Storm.

Yet still at eve, or midnight drear,
When wintry winds began to sweep;
When passing shrieks assail thine ear,
Or murmurs by the mountain steep;

When from the dark and sedgy dells
Come eldritch cries of wildered men;
Or wind-harp at thy window swells,—
Beware the sprite of Avin-Glen!

Young Farquhar ceased, and rising slow,
Doffed his plumed bonnet, wiped his brow,
And flushed with conscious dignity,
Cast o'er the crowd his falcon eye,
And found them all in silence deep,
As listening for the tempest sweep;

So well his tale of Avin's seer
Suited the rigour of the year;
So high his strain, so bold his lyre,
So fraught with rays of Celtic fire,
They almost weened each hum that past
The Spirit of the northern blast.

The next was named,—the very sound
Excited merriment around.
But when the bard himself appeared,
The ladies smiled, the courtiers sneered:
For such a simple air and mien
Before a court had never been.
A clown he was, bred in the wild,
And late from native moors exiled,
In hopes his mellow mountain strain
High favour from the great would gain.
Poor wight! he never weened how hard
For poverty to earn regard!
Dejection o'er his visage ran,
His coat was bare, his colour wan,
His forest doublet darned and torn,
His shepherd plaid all rent and worn;
Yet dear the symbols to his eye,
Memorials of a time gone by.

The bard on Ettrick's mountain green
In nature's bosom nursed had been,
And oft had marked in forest lone
Her beauties on her mountain throne;
Had seen her deck the wild-wood tree,
And star with snowy gems the lea;
In loveliest colours paint the plain,
And sow the moor with purple grain;
By golden mead and mountain sheer,
Had viewed the Ettrick waving clear,
Where shadowy flocks of purest snow
Seemed grazing in a world below.

Instead of Ocean's billowy pride,
Where monsters play and navies ride,
Oft had he viewed, as morning rose,
The bosom of the lonely Lowes,
Ploughed far by many a downy keel
Of wild-duck and of vagrant teal.
Oft thrilled his heart at close of even,
To see the dappled vales of heaven,
With many a mountain, moor, and tree,
Asleep upon the Saint Mary;
The pilot swan majestic wind,
With all his cygnet fleet behind,
So softly sail, and swiftly row,
With sable oar and silken prow.
Instead of war's unhallowed form,
His eye had seen the thunderstorm

[1] I only saw this old cairn at a distance; but the narrative which my guide gave me of the old man's loss was very affecting. He had gone to the forest in November to look after some goats that were missing, when a dreadful storm came suddenly on, the effects of which were felt throughout the kingdom. It was well enough known that he was lost in the forest; but the snow being so deep, it was judged impossible to find the body, and no one looked after it. It was not discovered until the harvest following, when it was found accidentally by a shepherd. The plaid and clothes which were uppermost not being decayed, it appeared like the body of a man lying entire; but when he began to move them, the dry bones rattled together, and the bare white skull was lying in the bonnet.

'A FAIRY BAND CAME RIDING ON

BLACKIE & SON GLASGOW EDINBURGH & LONDON

Descend within the mountain's brim,
And shroud him in its chambers grim;
Then from its bowels burst amain
The sheeted flame and sounding rain,
And by the bolts in thunder borne,
The heaven's own breast and mountain torn;
The wild roe from the forest driven;
The oaks of ages peeled and riven;
Impending oceans whirl and boil,
Convulsed by Nature's grand turmoil.

Instead of arms or golden crest,
His harp with mimic flowers was dressed:
Around, in graceful streamers, fell
The briar-rose and the heather-bell;
And there, his learning deep to prove,
Naturæ Donum graved above.
When o'er her mellow notes he ran,
And his wild mountain chant began,
Then first was noted in his eye
A gleam of native energy.

Old David.

THE TENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

Old David rose ere it was day,
And climbed old Wonfell's wizard brae;
Looked round, with visage grim and sour,
O'er Ettrick woods and Eskdale-moor.
An outlaw from the south he came,
And Ludlow was his father's name;
His native land had used him ill,
And Scotland bore him no good-will.

As fixed he stood, in sullen scorn,
Regardless of the streaks of morn,
Old David spied, on Wonfell cone,
A fairy band come riding on.
A lovelier troop was never seen;
Their steeds were white, their doublets green;
Their faces shone like opening morn,
And bloomed like roses on the thorn.
At every flowing mane was hung
A silver bell that lightly rung;
That sound, borne on the breeze away,
Oft set the mountaineer to pray.

Old David crept close in the heath.
Scarce moved a limb, scarce drew a breath;
But as the tinkling sound came nigh,
Old David's heart beat wondrous high.

He thought of riding on the wind;
Of leaving hawk and hern behind;
Of sailing lightly o'er the sea,
In mussel-shell to Germany;
Of revel raids by dale and down;
Of lighting torches at the moon;
Or through the sounding spheres to sing,
Borne on the fiery meteor's wing:
Of dancing 'neath the moonlight sky;
Of sleeping in the dew-cup's eye.
And then he thought—O! dread to tell!—
Of tithes the fairies paid to hell!

David turned up a reverend eye,
And fixed it on the morning sky;
He knew a mighty One lived there,
That sometimes heard a warrior's prayer—
No word save one, could David say;
Old David had not learned to pray.

Scarce will a Scotsman yet regard
What David saw, and what he heard.
He heard their horses snort and tread,
And every word the riders said;
While green portmanteaus, long and low,
Lay bended o'er each saddle-bow.
A lovely maiden rode between,
Whom David judged the Fairy Queen;
But strange! he heard her moans resound,
And saw her feet with fetters bound.

Fast spur they on through bush and brake;
To Ettrick woods their course they take.
Old David followed still in view,
Till near the Lochilaw they drew;
There in a deep and wondrous dell
Where wandering sunbeam never fell,
Where noontide breezes never blew,
From flowers to drink the morning dew;
There, underneath the sylvan shade,
The fairies' spacious bower was made.
Its rampart was the tangling sloe,
The bending briar, and mistletoe;
And o'er its roof the crooked oak
Waved wildly from the frowning rock.

This wondrous bower, this haunted dell,
The forest shepherd shunned as hell;
When sound of fairies' silver horn
Came on the evening breezes borne,
Homeward he fled, nor made a stand,
Thinking the spirits hard at hand.

[1] I remember hearing a very old man, named David Laidlaw, who lived somewhere in the neighbourhood of Hawick, relate many of the adventures of this old moss-trooper, his great progenitor, and the first who ever bore the name. He described him as a great champion—a man quite invincible; and quoted several verses of a ballad relating to him, which I never heard either before or since. I remember only one of them.

There was ane banna of barley meal
Cam duntin dune by Davy's sheil;
But out cam Davy and his lads,
And dang the banna a' in blads.

He explained how this "bannock of barley meal" meant a rich booty, which the old hero captured from a band of marauders. He lived at Garwell in Eskdale-moor.

Lochy-Law, where the principal scene of this tale is laid, is a hill on the lands of Shorthope in the wilds of Ettrick. The Fairy Slack is up in the middle of the hill, a very curious ravine, and would be much more so when overshadowed with wood. The Back-burn, which joins the Ettrick immediately below this hill, has been haunted time immemorial, both by the fairies, and the ghost of a wandering minstrel who was cruelly murdered there, and who sleeps in a lone grave at a small distance from the ford.

But when he heard the eldritch swell
Of giggling laugh and bridle bell,
Or saw the riders troop along,
His orisons were loud and strong:
His household fare he yielded free
To this mysterious company;
The fairest maid his cot within
Resigned with awe and little din.
True he might weep, but nothing say,
For none durst say the fairies nay.

Old David hasted home that night,
A wondering and a wearied wight.
Seven sons he had, alert and keen,
Had all in Border battles been;
Had wielded brand, and bent the bow,
For those who sought their everthrow.
Their hearts were true, their arms were strong,
Their falchions keen, their arrows long;
The race of fairies they denied—
No fairies kept the English side.

Our yeomen on their armour threw;
Their brands of steel and bows of yew;
Long arrows at their backs they sling,
Fledged from the Snowdon eagle's wing;
And boun' away brisk as the wind,
The sire before, the sons behind.

That evening fell so sweetly still,
So mild on lonely moor and hill,
The little genii of the fell
Forsook the purple heather-bell,
And all their dripping beds of dew,
In wind-flower, thyme, and violet blue;
Aloft their viewless looms they heave,
And dew-webs round the helmets weave.
The waning moon her lustre threw
Pale round her throne of softened blue;
Her circuit round the southland sky
Was languid, low, and quickly by:
Leaning on cloud so faint and fair,
And cradled on the golden air,
Modest and pale as maiden bride,
She sunk upon the trembling tide.

What late in daylight proved a jest,
Was now the doubt of every breast.
That fairies *were*, was not disputed;
But *what* they were was greatly doubted.
Each argument was guarded well,
With "if," and "should," and "who can tell."

"Sure He that made majestic man,
And framed the world's stupendous plan;
Who placed on high the steady pole,
And sowed the stars that round it roll;
And made that sky so large and blue—
Had power to make a fairy too."

The sooth to say, each valiant core
Knew feelings never felt before.

Oft had they darned the midnight brake,
Fearless of aught save bog and lake;
But now the nod of sapling fir,
The heath-cock's loud exulting whirr,
The cry of hern from sedgy pool,
Or airy bleeter's rolling howl,
Came fraught with more dismaying dread
Than warder's horn, or warrior's tread.

Just as the gloom of midnight fell,
They reached the fairies' lonely dell.
O heavens! that dell was dark as death!
Perhaps the pit-fall yawned beneath!
Perhaps that lane that winded low,
Led to a nether world of woe!
But stern necessity's control
Resistless sways the human soul.

The bows are bent, the tinders smoke
With fire by sword struck from the rock:
Old David held the torch before;
His right hand heaved a dread claymore,
Whose Rippon edge he meant to try
On the first fairy met his eye.
Above his head his brand was raised;
Above his head the taper blazed;
A sterner or a ghastlier sight,
Ne'er entered bower at dead of night.
Below each lifted arm was seen
The barbed point of arrow keen,
Which waited but the twang of bow
To fly like lightning on the foe.
Slow move they on, with steady eye,
Resolved to conquer or to die.

At length they spied a massive door,
Deep in a nook, unseen before;
And by it slept, on wicker chair,
A sprite of dreadful form and air.
His grisly beard flowed round his throat,
Like shaggy hair of mountain goat.
His open jaws and visage grim,
His half-shut eye so deadly dim,
Made David's blood to's bosom rush,
And his gray hair his helmet brush.
He squared, and made his falchion wheel
Around his back from head to heel;
Then, rising tiptoe, struck amain—
Down fell the sleeper's head in twain;
And springing blood, in veil of smoke,
Whizzed high against the bending oak.

"By heaven!" said George, with jocund air,
"Father, if all the fairies there
Are of the same materials made,
Let them beware the Rippon blade!"
A ghastly smile was seen to play
O'er David's visage, stern and gray;
He hoped, and feared; but ne'er till then
Knew whether he fought with sprites or men.

The massy door they next unlock,
That oped to hall beneath the rock,

In which new wonders met the eye:
The room was ample, rude, and high;
The arches caverned, dark, and torn,
On Nature's rifted columns borne;
Of moulding rude the embrasure,
And all the wild entablature;
And far o'er roof and architrave,
The ivy's ringlets bend and wave.
In each abrupt recess was seen
A couch of heath and rushes green;
While every alcove's sombre hue,
Was gemmed with drops of midnight dew.

Why stand our heroes still as death,
Nor muscle move, nor heave a breath?
See how the sire his torch has lowered,
And bends recumbent o'er his sword!
The arcubalister has thrown
His threatening, thirsty arrows down!
Struck in one moment, all the band
Entranced like moveless statues stand!—
Enchantment sure arrests the spear,
And stints the warrior's bold career.

List, list! what mellow angel-sound
Distils from yonder gloom profound?
'Tis not the note of gathering shell,
Of fairy horn, nor silver bell:
No, 'tis the lute's mellifluous swell,
Mixed with a maiden's voice so clear,
The flitting bats flock round to hear!

So wildly o'er the vault it rung,
That song, if in the green-wood sung,
Would draw the fays of wood and plain
To kiss the lips that poured the strain.
The lofty pine would listening lean;
The wild birch wave her tresses green;
And larks, that rose the dawn to greet,
Drop lifeless at the singer's feet.
The air was old, the measure slow,
The words were plain, but words of woe.

Soft died the strain; the warriors stand,
Nor rested lance, nor lifted brand,
But listening bend, in hopes again
To hear that sweetly plaintive strain.
'Tis gone! and each uplifts his eye,
As waked from dream of ecstasy.

Why stoops young Owen's gilded crest?
Why heave those groans from Owen's breast?
While kinsmen's eyes in rapture speak,
Why steals the tear o'er Owen's cheek?
That melting song, that song of pain,
Was sung to Owen's favourite strain:
The words were new, but that sweet lay
Had Owen heard in happier day.

Fast press they on; in close-set row,
Winded the lab'rinth far and low,
Till, in the cave's extremest bound,
Arrayed in sea-green silk, they found
Five beauteous dames, all fair and young;
And she, who late so sweetly sung,
Sat leaning o'er a silver lute,
Pale with despair, with terror mute.

When back her auburn locks she threw,
And raised her eyes so lovely blue,
'Twas like the woodland rose in dew.
That look was soft as morning flower,
And mild as sunbeam through the shower.
Old David gazed, and weened the while,
He saw a suffering angel smile;
Weened he had heard a seraph sing,
And sounds of a celestial string.
But when young Owen met her view,
She shrieked, and to his bosom flew:
For, oft before, in Moodlaw bowers,
They two had passed the evening hours.
She was the loveliest mountain maid
That e'er by grove or riv'let strayed;
Old Raeburn's child, the fairest flower
That ever bloomed in Eskdale-moor.
'Twas she the sire that morn had seen,
And judged to be the Fairy Queen;
'Twas she who framed the artless lay
That stopt the warriors on their way.

Close to her lover's breast she clung,
And round his neck enraptured hung:—
"O my dear Owen! haste and tell,
What caused you dare this lonely dell,
And seek your maid, at midnight still,
Deep in the bowels of the hill?
Here in this dark and drear abode,
By all deserted but my God,
Must I have reft the life he gave,
Or lived in shame a villain's slave.
I was, at midnight's murkest hour,
Stol'n from my father's stately tower,
And never thought again to view
The sun, or sky's ethereal blue:
But since the first of Border-men
Has found me in this dismal den,
I to his arms for shelter fly,
With him to live, or with him die."

How glowed brave Owen's manly face
While in that lady's kind embrace!
Warm tears of joy his utterance staid—
"O, my loved Ann!" was all he said.
Though well they loved, her high estate
Caused Owen aye aloof to wait:
And watch her bower beside the rill,
When twilight rocked the breezes still,
And waked the music of the grove
To hymn the vesper song of love;
Then underneath the green-wood bough,
Oft had they breathed the tender vow.

With Ann of Raeburn here they found
The flowers of all the Border round;

From whom the strangest tale they hear,
That e'er astounded warrior's ear;
'Twould make even Superstition blush,
And all her tales of spirits hush.

That night the spoilers ranged the vale,
By Dryhope towers, and Meggat-dale:
Ah! little trowed the fraudful train,
They ne'er should see their wealth again;
Their lemans, and their mighty store,
For which they nightly toils had bore
Full twenty autumn moons and more.
They little deemed, when morning dawned,
To meet the deadly Rippon brand;
And only find, at their return,
In their loved cave an early urn.
Ill suits it simple bard to tell
Of bloody work that there befell:
He lists not deeds of death to sing,
Of splintered spear, and twanging string,
Of piercing arrow's purpled wing,
How falchions flash, and helmets ring.
Not one of all that prowling band,
So long the terror of the land,
Not one escaped their deeds to tell;
All in the winding lab'rinth fell.
The spoil was from the cave conveyed,
Where in a heap the dead were laid;
The outer cave our yeomen fill,
And left them in the hollow hill.

But still that dell, and bourn beneath,
The forest shepherd dreads as death.
Not there at evening dares he stray,
Though love impatient points the way;
Though throbs his heart the maid to see,
That's waiting by the trysting tree.

Even the old sire, so reverend gray,
Ere turns the scale of night and day,
Oft breathes the short and ardent prayer,
That Heaven may guard his footsteps there;
His eyes, meantime, so dim with dread,
Scarce ken the turf his foot must tread.
For still 'tis told, and still believed,
That there the spirits were deceived,
And maidens from their grasp retrieved:
That this they still preserve in mind,
And watch, when sighs the midnight wind,
To wreak their rage on human kind.

Old David, for this doughty raid,
Was keeper of the forest made;
A trooper he of gallant fame,
And first of all the Laidlaw name.

E'er since, in Ettrick's glens so green,
Spirits, though there, are seldom seen;
And fears of elf, and fairy raid,
Have like a morning dream decayed.[1]
The bare-foot maid, of rosy hue,
Dares from the heath-flower brush the dew,

[1] The fairies have now totally disappeared; and it is pity they should; for they seem to have been the most delightful little spirits that ever haunted the Scottish dells. There are only very few now remaining alive who have ever seen them; and when they did, it was on Hallow-evenings, while they were young, when the gospel was not very rife in the country. But, strange as it may appear, with the witches it is far otherwise. Never, in the most superstitious ages, was the existence of witches, or the influence of their diabolical power, more firmly believed in, than by the inhabitants of the mountains of Ettrick Forest at the present day. Many precautions and charms are used to avert this influence, and scarcely does a summer elapse in which there are not some of the most gross incantations practised, in order to free flocks and herds from the blasting power of these old hags. There are two farmers still living, who will both make oath that they have wounded several old wives with shot as they were traversing the air in the shapes of moor-fowl and partridges. A very singular amusement that for old wives! I heard one of these *gentlemen* relate, with the utmost seriousness, and as a matter he did not wish to be generally known, that one morning, going out a fowling, he sprung a pair of moor-fowl in a place where it was not customary for moor-fowl to stay. He fired at the hen—wounded her, and eyed her until she alighted beyond an old dyke: when he went to the spot, his astonishment may be well conceived, when he found Nell ——— picking the hail out of her limbs! He was extremely vexed that he had not shot the cock, for he was almost certain he was no other than *Wattie Grieve!!!*

The tales and anecdotes of celebrated witches, that are still related in the country, are extremely whimsical and diverting. The following is a *well-authenticated one:* A number of gentlemen were one day met for a chase on the lands of Newhouse and Kirkhope—their greyhounds were numerous and keen, but not a hare could they raise. At length a boy came, who offered to start a hare to them, if they would give him a guinea, and the black greyhound to hold. The demand was singular, but it was peremptory, and on other conditions he would not comply. The guerdon was accordingly paid—the hare was started, and the sport afforded by the chase was excellent—the greyhounds were all baffled, and began to give up one by one, when one of the party came slily behind the boy, and cut the leash in which he held the black dog—away he flew to join the chase. The boy, losing all recollection, ran, bawling out with great vociferation, "Huy, mither, rin!!! Hay, rin, ye auld witch, if ever ye ran i' yer life!! Rin, mither, rin!!" The black dog came fast up with her, and was just beginning to *mouth* her, when she sprang in at the window of a little cottage and escaped. The riders soon came to the place, and entered the cot in search of the hare; but, lo! there was no living creature there but the old woman lying panting in a bed, so breathless that she could not speak a word!!!

But the best old witch tale that remains, is that which is related of the celebrated Michael Scott, Master of Oakwood. Sir Walter Scott has preserved it, but so altered from the original way, that it is not easy to recognize it. The old people tell it as follows: There was one of Master Michael's tenants who had a wife that was the most notable witch of the age. So extraordinary were her powers, that the country people began to put them in competition with those of the Master, and say, that in some *cantrips* she surpassed him. Michael could ill brook such insinuations; for there is always jealousy between great characters, and went over one day with his dogs on pretence of hunting, but in reality with an intent of exercising some of his infernal power in the chastisement of Lucky — (I have the best reason in the world for concealing her reputed name). He found her alone in the field weeding lint; and desired her, in a friendly manner, to show him some of her powerful art. She was very angry with him, and denied that she had any supernatural skill. He, however, continuing to press her, she told him sharply to let her alone, else she would make him repent the day he troubled her. How she perceived the virtues of Michael's wand is not known, but in a moment she snatched it from his hand, and gave him three lashes with it. The knight was momently changed to a hare, when the malicious and inveterate hag cried out, laughing, "Shu, Michael, rin or dee!" and baited all his own dogs upon him. He was extremely hard hunted, and was obliged to

To meet her love in moonlight still,
By flowery den or tinkling rill;
And well dares she till midnight stay,
Among the coils of fragrant hay.

True, some weak shepherds, gone astray,
As fell the dusk of Hallow-day,
Have heard the tinkling sound aloof,
And gentle tread of horse's hoof;
And flying swifter than the wind,
Left all their scattered flocks behind.

True, when the evening tales are told,
When winter nights are dark and cold,
The boy dares not to barn repair,
Alone, to say his evening prayer;
Nor dare the maiden ope the door,
Unless her lover walk before;
Then well can counterfeit the fright,
If star-beam on the water light;
And to his breast in terror cling,
For "such a dread and dangerous thing!"

O Ettrick! shelter of my youth!
Thou sweetest glen of all the south!
Thy fairy tales, and songs of yore,
Shall never fire my bosom more.
Thy winding glades, and mountains wild,
The scenes that pleased me when a child,
Each verdant vale, and flowery lea,
Still in my midnight dreams I see;
And waking oft I sigh for thee.
Thy hapless bard, though forced to roam,
Afar from thee without a home,
Still there his glowing breast shall turn,
Till thy green bosom fold his urn:
Then underneath thy mountain stone,
Shall sleep unnoticed and unknown.

When ceased the shepherd's simple lay,
With careless mein he lounged away;
No bow he deigned, nor anxious looked
How the gay throng their minstrel brooked:
No doubt within his bosom grew,
That to his skill the prize was due.
Well might he hope, for while he sung,
Louder and louder plaudits rung;
And when he ceased his numbers wild,
Fair royalty approved and smiled.
Long had the bard, with hopes elate,
Sung to the low, the gay, the great;
And once had dared, at flatterer's call,
To tune his harp in Branxholm Hall;
But nor his notes of soothing sound,
Nor zealous word of bard renowned,
Might those persuade, that worth could be
Inherent in such mean degree.
But when the smile of Sovereign fair
Attested genuine nature there,
Throbbed high with rapture every breast,
And all his merit stood confest.

Different the next the herald named;
Warrior he was, in battle maimed,
When Lennox on the downs of Kyle,
O'erthrew Maconnel and Argyle.
Unable more the sword to wield
With dark Clan-Alpine in the field,
Or rouse the dun deer from her den
With fierce Macfarlane and his men:
He strove to earn a minstrel name,
And fondly nursed the sacred flame.
Warm was his heart, and bold his strain;
Wild fancies in his moody brain
Gambolled, unbridled, and unbound,
Lured by a shade, decoyed by sound.

In tender age, when mind was free,
As standing by his nurse's knee,
He heard a tale so passing strange,
Of injured spirit's cool revenge,
It chilled his heart with blasting dread,
Which never more that bosom fled.

swim the river, and take shelter in the sewer of his own castle, from the fury of his pursuers, where he got leisure to change himself again to a man.

Michael being extremely chagrined at having been thus outwitted, studied a deadly revenge; and going over afterwards to hunt, he sent his man to Fauldshope to borrow some bread from Lucky —— to give to his dogs, for that he had neglected to feed them before he came from home. If she gave him the bread, he was to thank her and come away; but if she refused it, he gave him a line written in red characters, which he was to lodge above the lintel as he came out. The servant found her baking of bread, as his master assured him he would, and delivered his message. She received him most ungraciously, and absolutely refused to give him any bread, alleging, as an excuse, that she had not as much as would serve her own reapers to dinner. The man said no more, but lodged the line as directed, and returned to his master. The powerful spell had the desired effect; Lucky —— instantly threw off her clothes, and danced round and round the fire like one quite mad, singing the while with great glee—

"Master Michael Scott's man
Cam seekin bread an' gat nane."

The dinner hour arrived, but the reapers looked in vain for their dame, who was wont to bring it to them to the field. The goodman sent home a servant girl to assist her, but neither did she return. At length he ordered them to go and take their dinner at home, for he suspected his spouse had taken some of her *fairies*. All of them went inadvertently into the house, and, as soon as they passed beneath the mighty charm, were seized with the same mania, and followed the example of their mistress. The goodman, who had tarried behind, setting some shocks of corn, came home last; and hearing the noise ere ever he came near the house, he did not venture to go in, but peeped in at the window. There he beheld all his people dancing naked round and round the fire, and singing "Master Michael Scott's man," with the most frantic wildness. His wife was by that time quite exhausted, and the rest were half trailing her around. She could only now and then pronounce a syllable of the song, which she did with a kind of scream, yet seemed as intent on the sport as ever.

The goodman mounted his horse, and rode with all speed to the Master, to inquire what he had done to his people which had put them all mad. Michael bade him take down the note from the lintel and burn it, which he did, and all the people returned to their senses. Poor Lucky —— died overnight, and Michael remained unmatched and alone in all the arts of enchantment and necromancy.

When passion's flush had fled his eye,
And gray hairs told that youth was by,
Still quaked his heart at bush or stone,
As wandering in the gloom alone.

Where foxes roam, and eagles rave,
And dark woods round Ben-Lomond wave,
Once on a night, a night of dread!
He held convention with the dead;
Brought warnings to the house of death,
And tidings from a world beneath.

Loud blew the blast—the evening came,
The way was long, the minstrel lame;
The mountain's side was dern with oak,
Darkened with pine, and ribbed with rock;
Blue billows round its base were driven,
Its top was steeped in waves of heaven.
The wood, the wind, the billows' moan,
All spoke in language of their own,
But too well to our minstrel known.
Wearied, bewildered, in amaze,
Hymning in heart the Virgin's praise,
A cross he framed, of birchen bough,
And 'neath that cross he laid him low;
Hid by the heath and Highland plaid,
His old harp in his bosom laid.
Oh! when the winds that wandered by,
Sung on her breast their lullaby,
How thrilled the tones his bosom through,
And deeper, holier, poured his vow!

No sleep was his—he raised his eye,
To note if dangerous place was nigh.
There columned rocks, abrupt and rude,
Hung o'er his gateless solitude:
The muffled sloe, and tangling brier,
Precluded freak or entrance here;
But yonder oped a little path,
O'ershadowed, deep, and dark as death.
Trembling, he groped around his lair
For mountain ash, but none was there.
Teeming with forms, his terror grew;
Heedful he watched, for well he knew,
That in that dark and devious dell
Some lingering ghost or sprite must dwell:
So as he trowed, so it befell.

The stars were wrapt in curtain gray,
The blast of midnight died away:
'Twas just the hour of solemn dread,
When walk the spirits of the dead:
Rustled the leaves with gentle motion,
Groaned his chilled soul in deep devotion.
The lake-fowl's wake was heard no more;
The wave forgot to brush the shore;
Hushed was the bleat on moor and hill;
The wandering clouds of heaven stood still.

What heart could bear, what eye could meet
The spirits in their lone retreat?
Rustled again the darksome dell;
Straight on the minstrel's vision fell
A trembling and unwonted light,
That showed the phantoms to his sight.

Came first a slender female form,
Pale as the moon in winter storm;
A babe of sweet simplicity
Clung to her breast as pale as she,
And aye she sung its lullaby.
That cradle-song of the phantom's child.
O! but it was soothing, holy, and wild!
But O! that song can ill be sung
By Lowland bard or Lowland tongue.

The Spectre's Cradle-song.[1]

Hush, my bonny babe! hush and be still!
Thy mother's arms shall shield thee from ill.
Far have I borne thee in sorrow and pain,
To drink the breeze of the world again.
The dew shall moisten thy brow so meek,
And the breeze of midnight fan thy cheek,
And soon shall we rest in the bow of the hill;
Hush, my bonny babe! hush, and be still!
For thee have I travelled, in weakness and woe,
The world above and the world below.
My heart was soft and it fell in the snare;
Thy father was cruel, but thou wert fair.
I sinned, I sorrowed, I died for thee;
Smile, my bonny babe! smile on me!

See yon thick clouds of murky hue;
Yon star that peeps from its window blue;
Above yon clouds that wander far,
Away, above yon little star,
There's a home of peace that shall soon be thine,
And there shalt thou see thy Father and mine.
The flowers of the world shall bud and decay,
The trees of the forest be weeded away;
But there shalt *thou* bloom for ever and aye.

[1] I mentioned formerly that the tale of Macgregor is founded on a popular Highland tradition—so also is this Song of the Spectre in the introduction to it, which, to me at least, gives it a peculiar interest. As I was once travelling up Glen-Dochart, attended by Donald Fisher, a shepherd of that country, he pointed out to me some curious green dens, by the side of the large rivulet which descends from the back of Ben-More, the name of which, in the Gaelic language, signifies *the abode of the fairies*. A native of that country, who is still living, happening to be benighted there one summer evening, without knowing that the place was haunted, wrapped himself in his plaid, and lay down to sleep till the morning. About midnight he was awaked by the most enchanting music; and on listening, he heard a woman singing to her child. She sung the verses twice over, so that next morning he had several of them by heart. Fisher had heard them often recited in Gaelic, and he said they were wild beyond human conception. He remembered only a few lines, which were to the same purport with the Spirit's Song here inserted, namely, that she (the singer) had brought her babe from the regions below to be cooled by the breeze of the world, and that they would soon be obliged to part, for the child was going to heaven, and she was to remain for a season in purgatory. I had not before heard anything so truly romantic.

The time will come, I shall follow thee:
But long, long hence that time shall be:
Oh, weep not thou for thy mother's ill:
Hush, my bonny babe! hush and be still!

Slow moved she on with dignity,
Nor bush, nor brake, nor rock, nor tree,
Her footsteps staid—o'er cliff so bold,
Where scarce the roe her foot could hold,
Stately she wandered firm and free,
Singing her softened lullaby.

Three naked phantoms next came on:
They beckoned low, passed, and were gone.
Then came a troop of sheeted dead,
With shade of chieftain at their head:
And with our bard, in brake forlorn,
Held converse till the break of morn.
Their ghostly rites, their looks, their mould,
Or words, to man he never told:
But much he learned of mystery,
Of what was past, and what should be.
Thenceforth he troubles oft divined,
And scarcely held his perfect mind:
Yet still the song, admired when young,
He loved, and that in Court he sung.

The Fate of Macgregor.

THE ELEVENTH BARD'S SONG.

"Macgregor, Macgregor, remember our foemen:
The moon rises broad from the brow of Ben-Lomond;
The clans are impatient, and chide thy delay:
Arise! let us bound to Glen-Lyon away."—

Stern scowled the Macgregor, then silent and sullen,
He turned his red eye to the braes of Strathfillan;
"Go, Malcolm, to sleep, let the clans be dismissed;
The Campbells this night for Macgregor must rest."

"Macgregor, Macgregor, our scouts have been flying,
Three days, round the hills of M'Nab and Glen-Lyon:
Of riding and running such tidings they bear,
We must meet them at home, else they'll quickly be here."—

"The Campbell may come as his promises bind him,
And haughty M'Nab, with his giants behind him:
This night I am bound to relinquish the fray,
And do what it freezes my vitals to say.
Forgive me, dear brother, this horror of mind;
Thou knowest in the strife I was never behind,
Nor ever receded a foot from the van,
Or blenched at the ire or the prowess of man:
But I've sworn by the cross, by my God, and my all.
An oath which I cannot and dare not recall—
Ere the shadows of midnight fall east from the pile,
To meet with a spirit this night in Glen-Gyle.

"Last night, in my chamber, all thoughtful and lone,
I called to remembrance some deeds I had done,
When entered a lady with visage so wan,
And looks such as never were fastened on man.
I knew her, O brother! I knew her too well!
Of that once fair dame such a tale I could tell
As would thrill thy bold heart: but how long she remained,
So racked was my spirit, my bosom so pained,
I knew not—but ages seemed short to the while.
Though proffer the Highlands, nay all the green isle,
With length of existence no man can enjoy,
The same to endure, the dread proffer I'd fly;
The thrice-threatened pangs of last night to forego,
Macgregor would dive to the mansions below.
Despairing and mad, to futurity blind,
The present to shun, and some respite to find,
I swore, ere the shadow fell east from the pile,
To meet her alone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.

"She told me, and turned my chilled heart to a stone,
The glory and name of Macgregor were gone:
That the pine, which for ages had shed a bright halo
Afar on the mountains of Highland Glen-Falo,
Should wither and fall ere the turn of yon moon,
Smit through by the canker of hated Colquhoun:[1]
That a feast on Macgregors each day should be common,
For years, to the eagles of Lennox and Lomond.

"A parting embrace, in one moment, she gave:
Her breath was a furnace, her bosom the grave!
Then flitting elusive, she said with a frown,
'The mighty Macgregor shall yet be my own!'"

"Macgregor, thy fancies are wild as the wind;
The dreams of the night have disordered thy mind.
Come, buckle thy panoply—march to the field—
See, brother, how hacked are thy helmet and shield:
Ay, that was M'Nab, in the height of his pride,
When the lions of Dochart stood firm by his side.
This night the proud chief his presumption shall rue:
Rise, brother, these chinks in his heart-blood will glue:
Thy fantasies frightful shall flit on the wing,
When loud with thy bugle Glen-Lyon shall ring."—

Like glimpse of the moon through the storm of the night,
Macgregor's red eye shed one sparkle of light:

[1] The pine was the standard, and is still the crest, of the Macgregors; and it is well known that the proscription of that clan was occasioned by a slaughter of the Colquhouns, who were its constant and inveterate enemies. That bloody business let loose the vengeance of the country upon them, which had nearly extirpated the name. The Campbells and the Grahams arose and hunted them down like wild beasts, until a Macgregor could no more be found.

It faded—it darkened—he shuddered—he sighed—
"No! not for the universe!" low he replied.

Away went Macgregor, but went not alone:
To watch the dread rendezvous, Malcolm has gone.
They oared the broad Lomond, so still and serene,
And deep in her bosom, how awful the scene!
O'er mountains inverted the blue waters curled,
And rocked them on skies of a far nether world.

All silent they went, for the time was approaching;
The moon the blue zenith already was touching;
No foot was abroad on the forest or hill,
No sound but the lullaby sung by the rill:
Young Malcolm at distance couched, trembling the while—
Macgregor stood lone by the brook of Glen-Gyle.

Few minutes had passed, ere they spied on the stream
A skiff sailing light, where a lady did seem;
Her sail was the web of the gossamer's loom,
The glow-worm her wakelight, the rainbow her boom;
A dim rayless beam was her prow and her mast,
Like wold-fire at midnight, that glares on the waste.
Though rough was the river with rock and cascade,
No torrent, no rock, her velocity staid;
She wimpled the water to weather and lee,
And heaved as if borne on the waves of the sea.
Mute nature was roused in the bounds of the glen;
The wild deer of Gairtney abandoned his den,
Fled panting away, over river and isle,
Nor once turned his eye to the brook of Glen-Gyle.
The fox fled in terror; the eagle awoke,
As slumbering he dozed on the shelve of the rock;
Astonished, to hide in the moonbeam he flew,
And screwed the night-heaven till lost in the blue.

Young Malcolm beheld the pale lady approach:
The chieftain salute her, and shrink from her touch.
He saw the Macgregor kneel down on the plain,
As begging for something he could not obtain;
She raised him indignant, derided his stay,
Then bore him on board, set her sail, and away.

Though fast the red bark down the river did glide,
Yet faster ran Malcolm adown by its side;
"Macgregor! Macgregor!" he bitterly cried;
"Macgregor! Macgregor!" the echoes replied.
He struck at the lady, but, strange though it seem,
His sword only fell on the rocks and the stream:
But the groans from the boat, that ascended amain,
Were groans from a bosom in horror and pain.
They reached the dark lake, and bore lightly away—
Macgregor is vanished for ever and aye!

Abrupt as glance of morning sun,
The bard of Lomond's lay is done.

Loves not the swain, from path of dew,
At morn the golden orb to view,
Rise broad and yellow from the main,
While scarce a shadow lines the plain;
Well knows he then the gathering cloud
Shall all his noontide glories shroud.
Like smile of morn before the rain,
Appeared the minstrel's mounting strain.
As easy inexperienced hind,
Who sees not coming rains and wind,
The beacon of the dawning hour,
Nor notes the blink before the shower.
Astonished, 'mid his open grain,
Sees round him pour the sudden rain—
So looked the still attentive throng,
When closed at once Macfarlane's song.

Time was it: when he 'gan to tell
Of spectre stern, and barge of hell;
Loud, and more loud, the minstrel sung;
Loud, and more loud, the chords he rung;
Wild grew his looks, for well he knew,
The scene was dread, the tale was true;
And ere Loch-Ketturine's wave was won,
Faltered his voice, his breath was done.
He raised his brown hand to his brow,
To veil his eye's enraptured glow;
Flung back his locks of silver gray,
Lifted his crutch, and limped away.

The bard of Clyde stepped next in view;
Tall was his form, his harp was new;
Brightened his dark eye as he sung;
A stammer fluttered on his tongue;
A captain in the wars was he,
And sprung of noble pedigree.

Earl Walter.

THE TWELFTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

"What makes Earl Walter pace the wood
In the wan light of the moon?
Why altered is Earl Walter's mood
So strangely, and so soon?"—

"It is his lot to fight a knight
Whom man could never tame,
To-morrow, in his sovereign's sight,
Or bear perpetual shame."—

"Go warn the Clyde, go warn the Ayr,
Go warn them suddenly,
If none will fight for Earl Walter,
Some one may fight for me."—

"Now hold your tongue, my daughter dear,
Now hold your tongue for shame!
For never shall my son Walter
Disgrace his father's name.

[1] This ballad is founded on a well known historical fact. Holinshed mentions it slightly in the following words: "A Frenchman named Sir Anthony Darcie, knight, called afterwards *Le Sire de la Barthe*, came through England into Scotland to seek feats of arms. And coming to the king the four and twentie of September, the Lord Hamilton fought with him right valiantly, and so as neither of them lost any piece of honour."

"Shall ladies tell, and minstrels sing,
How lord of Scottish blood
By proxy fought before his king
No, never! by the rood!"—

Earl Walter rose ere it was day,
For battle made him boun';
Earl Walter mounted his bonny gray,
And rode to Stirling town.

Old Hamilton from the tower came down,
"Go saddle a steed for me,
And I'll away to Stirling town,
This deadly bout to see.

"Mine eye is dim, my locks are gray,
My cheek is furred and wan;
Ah, me! but I have seen the day
I feared not single man!

"Bring me my steed," said Hamilton;
"Darcie his vaunts may rue:
Whoever slays my only son
Must fight the father too.

"Whoever fights my noble son
May foin the best he can;
Whoever braves Wat Hamilton,
Shall know he braves a man."—

And there was riding in belt and brand,
And running o'er holt and lea;
For all the lords of fair Scotland
Came there the fight to see.

And squire, and groom, and baron bold,
Trooping in thousands came,
And many a hind, and warrior old,
And many a lovely dame.

When good Earl Walter rode the ring,
Upon his mettled gray,
There was none so ready as our good king
To bid that earl good day.

For one so gallant and so young,
Oh! many a heart beat high;
And no fair eye in all the throng,
Nor rosy cheek, was dry.

But up then spoke the king's daughter,
Fair Margaret was her name—
"If we should lose brave Earl Walter,
My sire is sore to blame.

"Forbid the fight, my liege, I pray,
Upon my bended knee."—
"Daughter, I'm loath to say you nay;
It cannot, must not be."—

"Proclaim it round," the princess cried,
"Proclaim it suddenly;
If none will fight for Earl Walter,
Some one may fight for me.

"In Douglas-dale I have a tower,
With many a holm and hill,
I'll give them all, and ten times more,
To him will Darcie kill."—

But up then spoke old Hamilton,
And doffed his bonnet blue;
In his sunk eye the tear-drop shone,
And his gray locks o'er it flew:—

"Cease, cease, thou lovely royal maid,
Small cause hast thou for pain;
Wat Hamilton shall have no aid
'Gainst lord of France or Spain.

"I love my boy; but should he fly,
Or other for him fight,
Heaven grant that first his parent's eye
May set in endless night!"—

Young Margaret blushed, her weeping staid,
And quietly looked on:
Now Margaret was the fairest maid
On whom the daylight shone.

Her eye was like the star of love
That blinks across the evening dun:
The locks that waved that eye above,
Like light clouds curling round the sun.

When Darcie entered in the ring,
A shudder round the circle flew:
Like men who from a serpent spring,
They startled at the view.

His look so fierce, his crest so high,
His belts and bands of gold,
And the glances of his charger's eye
Were dreadful to behold.

But when he saw Earl Walter's face,
So rosy and so young,
He frowned, and sneered with haughty grace,
And round disdainful flung.

"What! dost thou turn my skill to sport,
And break thy jests on me?
Think'st thou I sought the Scottish court
To play with boys like thee?

"Fond youth, go home and learn to ride:
For pity get thee gone;
Tilt with the girls and boys of Clyde,
And boast of what thou'st done.

"If Darcie's spear but touch thy breast,
It flies thy body through:
If Darcie's sword come o'er thy crest,
It cleaves thy head in two."

"I came not here to vaunt, Darcie;
I came not here to scold;
It ill befits a knight like thee
Such proud discourse to hold.

"To-morrow boast, amid the throng,
Of deeds which thou hast done:
To-day restrain thy saucy tongue;
Rude blusterer, come on!"

Rip went the spurs in either steed,
To different posts they sprung;
Quivered each spear o'er charger's head;
Forward each warrior hung.

The horn blew once—the horn blew twice—
Oh! many a heart beat high!
'Twas silence all!—the horn blew thrice—
Dazzled was every eye.

Hast thou not seen, from heaven, in ire,
The eagle swift descend!
Hast thou not seen the shected fire
The lowering darkness rend?

Not faster glides the eagle gray
Adown the yielding wind;
Not faster bears the bolt away,
Leaving the storm behind;

Than flew the warriors on their way,
With full suspended breath;
Than flew the warriors on their way
Across the field of death.

So fierce the shock, so loud the clang,
The gleams of fire were seen:
The rocks and towers of Stirling rang,
And the red blood fell between.

Earl Walter's gray was borne aside,
Lord Darcie's black held on.
"Oh! ever alack," fair Margaret cried,
"The brave Earl Walter's gone!"
"Oh! ever alack," the king replied,
"That ever the deed was done!"

Earl Walter's broken corslet doffed,
He turned with lightened eye:
His glancing spear he raised aloft,
And seemed to threat the sky.

Lord Darcie's spear aimed at his breast,
He parried dext'rously;
Then caught him rudely by the wrist,
Saying, "Warrior, come with me!"

Lord Darcie drew, Lord Darcie threw,
But threw and drew in vain:
Lord Darcie drew, Lord Darcie threw,
And spurred his black amain.

Down came Lord Darcie; casque and brand
Loud rattled on the clay;
Down came Earl Walter; hand in hand,
And head to head they lay.

Lord Darcie's steed turned to his lord,
And trembling stood behind;

But off Earl Walter's dapple scoured
Far fleeter than the wind;
Nor stop, nor stay, nor gate, nor ford,
Could make her look behind.

O'er holt, o'er hill, o'er slope and slack,
She sought her native stall;
She liked not Darcie's doughty black,
Nor Darcie's spear at all.

"Even go thy ways," Earl Walter cried,
"Since better may not be:
I'll trust my life with weapon tried,
But never again with thee.

"Rise up, Lord Darcie, sey thy brand,
And fling thy mail away;
For foot to foot, and hand to hand,
We'll now decide the day."

So said, so done: their helms they flung,
Their doublets linked and sheen;
And hauberk, armlet, cuirass, rung
Promiscuous on the green.

"Now, Darcie! now thy dreaded name,
That oft has chilled a foe,
Thy hard-earned honours, and thy fame,
Depend on every blow.

"Sharp be thine eye, and firm thy hand;
Thy heart unmoved remain;
For never was the Scottish brand
Upreared and reared in vain."—

"Now do thy best, young Hamilton,
Rewarded shalt thou be;
Thy king, thy country, and thy kin,
All, all depend on thee!

"Thy father's heart yearns for his son,
The ladies' cheeks grow wan;
Wat Hamilton, Wat Hamilton,
Now prove thyself a man!"

What makes Lord Darcie shift and dance
So fast around the plain?
What makes Lord Darcie strike and lance,
As passion fired his brain?

"Lay on, lay on," said Hamilton;
"Thou bear'st thee boist'rously;
If thou shouldst pelt till day be done,
Thy weapon I defy."

What makes Lord Darcie shift and wear
So fast around the plain?
Why are Lord Darcie's hollands fair
All striped with crimson grain?—

The first blow that Earl Walter made,
He clove his bearded chin.
"Beshrew thy heart," Lord Darcie said,
"Ye sharply do begin!"

Keeley Halswelle

Thomas Brown

QUEEN MARY'S WAKE IN HOLYROOD.

THE THIRTEENTH BARD.

The next blow that Earl Walter made,
Quite through the gare it ran.
"Now, by my faith," Lord Darcie said,
"That's stricken like a man!"

The third blow that Earl Walter made,
It piereed his lordly side.
"Now by my troth," Lord Darcie said,
"Thy marks are ill to bide!"

Lord Darcie's sword he forced a-hight,
And tripped him on the plain.
"O, ever alack," then cried the knight,
"I ne'er shall rise again!"

When good Earl Walter saw he grew
So pale and lay so low,
Away his brace of swords he threw,
And raised his fainting foe.

Then rang the list with shouts of joy,
Loud and more loud they grew,
And many a bonnet to the sky
And many a coif they threw.

The tear stood in the father's eye,—
He wiped his aged brow:—
"Give me thy hand, my gallant boy!
I knew thee not till now.

"My liege, my king, this is my son
Whom I present to thee;
Nor would I change Wat Hamilton
For all the lads I see!"

"Welcome, my friend and warrior old!
This gallant son of thine
Is much too good for baron bold,
He must be son of mine!

"For he shall wed my daughter dear,
The flower of fair Scotland;
The badge of honour he shall wear,
And sit at my right hand.

"And he shall have the lands of Kyle,
And royal bounds of Clyde;
And he shall have all Arran's Isle
To dower his royal bride."

The princess smiled, and sore was flushed.
O, but her heart was fain!
And aye her cheek of beauty blushed,
Like rose-bud in the rain.

From this the Hamiltons of Clyde
Their royal lineage draw;[1]
And thus was won the fairest bride
That Scotland ever saw!

When ceased the lay, the plaudits rung.
Not for the bard, or song he sung;
But every eye with pleasure shone,
And cast its smiles on one alone—
That one was princely Hamilton!
And well the gallant chief approved
The bard who sung of sire beloved;
And pleased were all the Court to see
The minstrel hailed so courteously.

Again is every courtier's gaze
Speaking suspense, and deep amaze:
The bard was stately, dark, and stern,—
'Twas Drummond from the moors of Ern;
Tall was his frame, his forehead high.
Still and mysterious was his eye;
His look was like a winter day,
When storms and winds have sunk away.

Well versed was he in holy lore:
In cloistered dome the cowl he wore;
But, wearied with the eternal strain
Of formal breviats, cold and vain,
He wooed. in depth of Highland dale,
The silver spring and mountain gale.

In gray Glen-Ample's forest deep,
Hid from the rains and tempests' sweep.
In bosom of an aged wood
His solitary cottage stood.
Its walls were bastioned, dark and dern,
Dark was its roof of filmot fern.
And dark the vista down the linn.
But all was love and peace within.
Religion, man's first friend and best,
Was in that home a constant guest;
There sweetly, every morn and even,
Warm orisons were poured to Heaven;
And every cliff Glen-Ample knew,
And greenwood on her banks that grew,
In answer to his bounding string,
Had learned the hymns of Heaven to sing,
With many a song of mystic lore,
Rude as when sung in days of yore.

His were the snowy flocks that strayed
Adown Glen-Airtney's forest glade;
And his the goat, and chestnut hind,
Where proud Ben-Vorlich cleaves the wind:
There oft, when suns of summer shone,
The bard would sit and muse alone,
Of innocence expelled by man:
Of nature's fair and wondrous plan;
Of the eternal throne sublime:
Of visions seen in ancient time;
Till his rapt soul would leave her home
In visionary worlds to roam.
Then would the mists that wandered by
Seem hovering spirits to his eye:
Then would the breeze's whistling sweep,
Soft lulling in the cavern deep,

[1] The Princess Margaret of Scotland was married to the Lord Hamilton when only sixteen years of age. Holinshed says, "Of this marriage, those of the house of Hamilton are descended, and are nearest of blood to the crown of Scotland, as they pretend, for (as saith Lesleus, lib. viii. p. 316) if the line of the Stuarts fail, the crown is to come to them."

Seem to the enthusiast's dreaming ear
The words of spirits whispered near.

Loathed his firm soul the measured chime
And florid films of modern rhyme:
No other lays became his tongue
But those his rude forefathers sung.
And when, by wandering minstrel warned,
The mandate of his queen he learned,
So much he prized the ancient strain,
High hopes had he the prize to gain.
With modest, yet majestic mein,
He tuned his harp of solemn strain:
Oh list the tale, ye fair and young,
A lay so strange was never sung!

Kilmeny.

THE THIRTEENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
It was only to hear the Yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring;
The scarlet hypp and the hyndberrye,
And the nut that hung frae the hazel tree;
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
And lang may she seek i' the greenwood shaw,
Lang the laird of Duneira blame,
And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame!

When many lang day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
When mess for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
When the bedes-man had prayed, and the dead bell rung:
Late, late in a gloamin when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung o'er the plain,
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
When the ingle lowed wi' an eiry leme,
Late, late in the gloamin Kilmeny came hame!

[1] Beside the old tradition on which this ballad is founded, there are some modern incidents of a similar nature, which cannot well be accounted for, yet are as well attested as any occurrence that has taken place in the present age. The relation may be amusing to some readers.

A man in the parish of Traquair, and county of Peebles, was busied one day casting turf in a large open field opposite to the mansion-house—the spot is well known, and still pointed out as rather unsafe; his daughter, a child seven years of age, was playing beside him, and amusing him with her prattle. Chancing to ask a question at her, he was surprised at receiving no answer, and, looking behind him, he perceived that his child was not there. He always averred that, as far as he could remember, she had been talking to him about half a minute before; he was certain it was not above a whole one at most. It was in vain that he ran searching all about like one distracted, calling her name—no trace of her remained. He went home in a state of mind that may be better conceived than expressed, and raised the people of the parish, who searched for her several days with the same success. Every pool in the river, every bush and den on the mountains around, was searched in vain. It was remarked that the father never much encouraged the search, being thoroughly persuaded that she was carried away by some invisible being, else she could not have vanished so suddenly. As a last resource, he applied to the minister of Inverleithen, a neighbouring divine of exemplary piety and zeal in religious matters, who enjoined him to cause prayers be offered to God for her in seven Christian churches, next Sabbath, at the same instant of time; "and then," said he, "if she is dead, God will forgive our sin in praying for the dead, as we do it through ignorance; and if she is still alive, I will answer for it, that all the devils in hell shall be unable to keep her." The injunction was punctually attended to. She was remembered in the prayers of all the neighbouring congregations, next Sunday, at the same hour, and never were there such prayers for fervour heard before. There was one clergyman in particular, Mr. Davidson, who prayed in such a manner that all the hearers trembled. As the old divine foreboded, so it fell out. On that very day, and within an hour of the time on which these prayers were offered, the girl was found in the Plora wood sitting, picking the bark from a tree. She could give no perfect account of the circumstances which had befallen to her, but she said she did not want plenty of meat, for that her mother came and fed her with milk and bread several times a day, and sung her to sleep at night. Her skin had acquired a bluish cast, which gradually wore off in the course of a few weeks. Her name was Jane Brown; she lived to a very advanced age, and was known to many still alive. Every circumstance of this story is truth, if the father's report of the suddenness of her disappearance may be relied on.

Another circumstance, though it happened still later, is not less remarkable. A shepherd of Tushilaw, in the parish of Ettrick, whose name was Walter Dalgleish, went out to the heights of that farm, one Sabbath morning, to herd the young sheep for his son, and let him to church. He took his own dinner along with him, and his son's breakfast. When the sermons were over, the lad went straight home, and did not return to his father. Night came, but nothing of the old shepherd appeared. When it grew very late his dog came home—seemed terrified, and refused to take any meat. The family were ill at ease during the night, especially as they never had known his dog leave him before; and early next morning the lad arose and went to the height, to look after his father and his flock. He found his sheep all scattered, and his father's dinner unbroken, lying on the same spot where they had parted the day before. At the distance of twenty yards from the spot, the plaid which the old man wore was lying as if it had been flung from him, and a little farther on, in the same direction, his bonnet was found, but nothing of himself. The country people, as on all such occasions, rose in great numbers, and searched for him many days. My father, and several old men still alive, were of the party. He could not be found or heard of, neither dead nor alive, and at length they gave up all thoughts of ever seeing him more.

On the twentieth day after his disappearance, a shepherd's wife, at a place called Berry-bush, came in as the family were sitting down to dinner, and said, that if it were possible to believe that Walter Dalgleish was still in existence, she would say yonder was he coming down the hill. They all ran out to watch the phenomenon, and as the person approached nigher, they perceived that it was actually he, walking without his plaid and his bonnet. The place where he was first descried is not a mile distant from that where he was last seen, and there is neither brake, hag, nor bush. When he came into the house, he shook hands with them all—asked for his family, and spoke as if he had been absent for years, and as if convinced something had befallen them. As they perceived something singular in his looks and manner, they unfortunately forebore asking him any questions at first, but desired him to sit and share their dinner. This he readily complied with, and began to sup some broth with seeming eagerness. He had only taken one or two spoonfuls when he suddenly stopped, a kind of rattling noise was heard in his breast, and he sunk back in a faint. They put him to bed, and from that time forth he never spoke another word that any person could make sense of. He was removed to his own home, where he lingered a few weeks, and then died. What befell him remains to this day a mystery, and for ever must.

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Lang hae we sought baith holt and dean;
By linn, by ford, and greenwood tree,
Yet you are halesome and fair to see.
Where gat you that joup o' the lily sheen?
That bonny snood o' the birk sae green?
And these roses, the fairest that ever were seen?—
Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?"

Kilmeny looked up with a lovely grace,
But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her ee,
As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she ken'd not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;
Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew.
But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
And a land where sin had never been;
A land of love, and a land of light,
Withouten sun, or moon, or night;
Where the river swa'd a living stream,
And the light a pure and cloudless beam;
The land of vision it would seem,
A still, an everlasting dream.

In yon green wood there is a waik,
And in that waik there is a wene,
And in that wene there is a maike,
That neither has flesh, nor blood, nor bane;
And down in yon greenwood he walks his lane.

In that green wene Kilmeny lay,
Her bosom hap'd wi' flowerets gay;
But the air was soft and the silence deep,
And bonny Kilmeny fell sound asleep.
She kenned nae mair, nor opened her ee,
Till waked by the hymns of a far countrye.

She woke on a couch of the silk sae slim,
All striped wi' the bars of the rainbow's rim;
And lovely beings round were rife,
Who erst had travelled mortal life;
And aye they smiled, and 'gan to speer,
"What spirit has brought this mortal here?"

"Lang have I ranged the world wide,"
A meek and reverend fere replied;
"Baith night and day I have watched the fair,
Eident a thousand years and mair.
Yes, I have watched o'er ilk degree,
Wherever blooms femenitye;
And sinless virgin, free of stain
In mind and body, fand I nane.
Never, since the banquet of time,
Found I a virgin in her prime,
Till late this bonnie maiden I saw
As spotless as the morning snaw:
Full twenty years she has lived as free
As the spirits that sojourn in this countrye:
I have brought her away frae the snares of men,
That sin or death she never may ken."

They clasped her waist and her hands sae fair,
They kissed her cheek, and they kemed her hair;
And round came many a blooming fere,
Saying, "Bonny Kilmeny, ye're welcome here!
Women are freed of the littand scorn:—
O, blessed be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!
Many lang year in sorrow and pain,
Many lang year through the world we've gane,
Commissioned to watch fair womankind,
For it's they who nurse the immortal mind.
We have watched their steps as the dawning shone,
And deep in the greenwood walks alone;
By lily bower and silken bed,
The viewless tears have o'er them shed;
Have soothed their ardent minds to sleep,
Or left the couch of love to weep.
We have seen! we have seen! but the time maun
come,
And the angels will weep at the day of doom!

"O, would the fairest of mortal kind
Aye keep these holy truths in mind,
That kindred spirits their motions see,
Who watch their ways with anxious ee,
And grieve for the guilt of humanitye!
O, sweet to Heaven the maiden's prayer,
And the sigh that heaves a bosom sae fair!
And dear to Heaven the words of truth,
And the praise of virtue frae beauty's mouth!
And dear to the viewless forms of air,
The mind that kythes as the body fair!

"O, bonny Kilmeny! free frae stain,
If ever you seek the world again,
That world of sin, of sorrow, and fear,
O tell of the joys that are waiting here;
And tell of the signs you shall shortly see;
Of the times that are now, and the times that shall be."

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
And she walked in the light of a sunless day:
The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
The fountain of vision, and fountain of light:
The emerant fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.
Then deep in the stream her body they laid,
That her youth and beauty never might fade;
And they smiled on heaven, when they saw her lie
In the stream of life that wandered by.
And she heard a song, she heard it sung,
She kend not where; but sae sweetly it rung,
It fell on her ear like a dream of the morn:—
"O! blest be the day Kilmeny was born!
Now shall the land of the spirits see,
Now shall it ken what a woman may be!
The sun that shines on the world sae bright,
A borrowed gleid frae the fountain of light;

And the moon that sleeks the sky sae dun,
Like a gouden bow, or a beamless sun,
Shall wear away and be seen nae mair,
And the angels shall miss them travelling the air.
But lang, lang after baith night and day,
When the sun and the world have fled away;
When the sinner has gane to his waesome doom,
Kilmeny shall smile in eternal bloom!"

They bore her away, she wist not how,
For she felt not arm nor rest below;
But so swift they wained her through the light,
'Twas like the motion of sound or sight;
They seemed to split the gales of air,
And yet nor gale nor breeze was there.
Unnumbered groves below them grew;
They came, they past, and backward flew,
Like floods of blossoms gliding on,
A moment seen, in a moment gone.
O, never vales to mortal view
Appeared like those o'er which they flew!
That land to human spirits given,
The lowermost vales of the storied heaven:
From thence they can view the world below,
And heaven's blue gates with sapphires glow,
More glory yet unmeet to know.

They bore her far to a mountain green,
To see what mortal never had seen;
And they seated her high on a purple sward,
And bade her heed what she saw and heard;
And note the changes the spirits wrought,
For now she lived in the land of thought.
She looked, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
But a crystal dome of a thousand dyes;
She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
But an endless whirl of glory and light:
And radiant beings went and came
Far swifter than wind, or the linked flame.
She hid her een frae the dazzling view;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw a sun on a summer sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had lakes and mountains gray;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles,
And marled seas and a thousand isles.
Its fields were speckled, its forests green,
And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
The sun and the sky, and the cloudlet gray;
Which heaved and trembled, and gently swung,
On every shore they seemed to be hung:
For there they were seen on their downward plain
A thousand times, and a thousand again;
In winding lake, and placid firth,
Little peaceful heavens in the bosom of earth.

Kilmeny sighed and seemed to grieve,
For she found her heart to that land did cleave;
She saw the corn wave on the vale,
She saw the deer run down the dale;
She saw the plaid and the broad claymore,
And the brows that the badge of freedom bore;—
And she thought she had seen the land before.

She saw a lady sit on a throne,
The fairest that ever the sun shone on:
A lion licked her hand of milk,
And she held him in a leish of silk;
And a leifu' maiden stood at her knee,
With a silver wand and melting ee;
Her sovereign shield till love stole in,
And poisoned all the fount within.

Then a gruff untoward bedes-man came,
And hundit the lion on his dame;
And the guardian maid wi' the dauntless ee,
She dropped a tear, and left her knee;
And she saw till the queen frae the lion fled,
Till the bonniest flower of the world lay dead;
A coffin was set on a distant plain,
And she saw the red blood fall like rain:
Then bonny Kilmeny's heart grew sair,
And she turned away, and could look nae mair.

Then the gruff grim carle girned amain,
And they trampled him down, but he rose again;
And he baited the lion to deeds of weir,
Till he lapped the blood to the kingdom dear;
And weening his head was danger-preef,
When crowned with the rose and clover leaf,
He gowled at the carle, and chased him away
To feed wi' the deer on the mountain gray.
He gowled at the earle, and he gecked at Heaven,
But his mark was set, and his arles given.
Kilmeny a while her een withdrew;
She looked again, and the scene was new.

She saw below her fair unfurled
One half of all the glowing world,
Where oceans rolled, and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.
She saw a people, fierce and fell,
Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;
There lilies grew, and the eagle flew,
And she herked on her ravening crew,
Till the cities and towers were wrapt in a blaze,
And the thunder it roared o'er the lands and the seas.
The widows wailed, and the red blood ran,
And she threatened an end to the race of man:
She never lened, nor stood in awe,
Till caught by the lion's deadly paw.
Oh! then the eagle swinked for life,
And brainzelled up a mortal strife;
But flew she north, or flew she south,
She met wi' the gowl of the lion's mouth.

With a mooted wing and waefu' maen,
The eagle sought her eiry again;
But lang may she cower in her bloody nest,
And lang, lang sleek her wounded breast,

Before she sey another flight,
To play wi' the norland lion's might.

But to sing the sights Kilmeny saw,
So far surpassing nature's law,
The singer's voice wad sink away,
And the string of his harp wad cease to play.
But she saw till the sorrows of man were by,
And all was love and harmony;—
Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
Like the flakes of snaw on a winter day.

Then Kilmeny begged again to see
The friends she had left in her ain countrye,
To tell of the place where she had been,
And the glories that lay in the land unseen;
To warn the living maidens fair,
The loved of Heaven, the spirits' care,
That all whose minds unmeled remain
Shall bloom in beauty when time is gane.

With distant music, soft and deep,
They lulled Kilmeny sound asleep;
And when she awakened, she lay her lane,
All happed with flowers in the greenwood wene.
When seven lang years had come and fled;
When grief was calm, and hope was dead;
When scarce was remembered Kilmeny's name,
Late, late in a gloamin Kilmeny came hame.
And O, her beauty was fair to see,
But still and steadfast was her ee!
Such beauty bard may never declare,
For there was no pride nor passion there;
And the soft desire of maiden's een
In that mild face could never be seen.
Her seymar was the lily flower,
And her cheek the moss-rose in the shower;
And her voice like the distant melodye,
That floats along the twilight sea.
But she loved to raike the lanely glen,
And keep afar frae the haunts of men;
Her holy hymns unheard to sing,
To suck the flowers and drink the spring.
But wherever her peaceful form appeared,
The wild beasts of the hill were cheered;
The wolf played blythely round the field,
The lordly byson lowed and kneeled;
The dun deer wooed with manner bland,
And cowered aneath her lily hand.
And when at eve the woodlands rung,
When hymns of other worlds she sung
In ecstasy of sweet devotion,
O, then the glen was all in motion!
The wild beasts of the forest came,
Broke from their boughts and faulds the tame,
And goved around, charmed and amazed;
Even the dull cattle crooned and gazed,
And murmured and looked with anxious pain
For something the mystery to explain.
The buzzard came with the throstle-cock;
The corby left her houf in the rock;
The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;
The hind came tripping o'er the dew;
The wolf and the kid their raike began,
And the tod, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;
The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
And the merl and the mavis forhooyed their young;
And all in a peaceful ring were hurled:—
It was like an eve in a sinless world!

When a month and a day had come and gane,
Kilmeny sought the greenwood wene;
There laid her down on the leaves sae green,
And Kilmeny on earth was never mair seen.
But O, the words that fell from her mouth,
Were words of wonder and words of truth!
But all the land were in fear and dread,
For they kendna whether she was living or dead.
It wasna her hame and she couldna remain;
She left this world of sorrow and pain,
And returned to the land of thought again.

He ceased; and all with kind concern
Blessed in their hearts the bard of Ern.

By that the chill and piercing air,
The pallid hue of ladies fair,
The hidden yawn, and drumbly eye
Loudly announced the morning nigh.
Beckoned the Queen with courteous smile,
And breathless silence gazed the while:—

"I hold it best, my lords," she said,
"For knight, for dame, and lovely maid,
At wassail, wake, or revel hall,
To part before the senses pall.
Sweet though the draught of pleasure be,
Why should we drain it to the lee?
Though here the minstrel's fancy play,
Light as the breeze of summer day;
Though there in solemn cadence flow,
Smooth as the night wind o'er the snow;
Now bound away with rolling sweep,
Like tempest o'er the raving deep;
High on the morning's golden screen,
Or casemate of the rainbow lean:—
Such beauties were in vain prolonged,
The soul is cloyed, the minstrel wronged.

"Loud is the morning blast and chill,
The snow-drift speeds along the hill;
Let ladies of the storm beware,
And knights of ladies take a care;
From lanes and alleys guard them well,
Where lurking ghost or sprite may dwell;
But most avoid the dazzling flare,
And spirit of the morning air;
Hide from their eyes that hideous form,
The ruthless angel of the storm.
I wish for every gallant's sake,
That none may rue our Royal Wake:

I wish what most his heart approves,
And every lady what she loves,—
Sweet be her sleep on bed of down,
And pleasing be her dreams till noon.
And when you hear the bugle's strain,
I hope to see you all again."

Whether the Queen to fear inclined,
Or spoke to cheer the minstrel's mind,
Certes, she spoke with meaning leer,
And ladies smiled her words to hear.
Yet, though the dawn of morning shone,
No lady from that night-wake gone,
Not even the queen durst sleep alone.
And scarce had sleep, with throb and sigh,
O'er breast of snow and moistened eye
Outspread his shadowy canopy,
When every fervid female mind,
Or sailed with witches on the wind,
In Carlisle drank the potent wine,
Or floated on the foamy brine.
Some strove the land of thought to win,
Impelled by hope, withstood by sin;
And some with angry spirit stood
By lonely stream, or pathless wood.
And oft was heard the broken sigh,
The half-formed prayer and smothered cry:
So much the minds of old and young
Were moved by what the minstrels sung.
What Lady Gordon did or said
Could not be learned from lady's maid,
And Huntly swore and shook his head:
But she and all her buskined train
Appeared not at the Wake again.

NIGHT THE THIRD.

The storm had ceased to shroud the hill;
The morning's breath was pure and chill;
And when the sun rose from the main,
No eye the glory could sustain.
The icicles so dazzling bright;
The spreading wold so smooth and white;
The cloudless sky, the air so sheen,
That roes on Pentland's top were seen;
And Grampian mountains, frowning high,
Seemed frozen 'mid the northern sky.
The frame was braced, the mind set free
To feat, or brisk hilarity.

The sun far on his southern throne,
Glowed in stern majesty alone:
'Twas like the loved, the toilsome day,
That dawns on mountains west away,
When the furred Indian hunter hastes
Far up his Appalachian wastes,
To range the savage haunts, and dare
In his dark home the sullen bear.
And ere that noon-day sun had shone
Right on the banks of Duddingston,
Heavens! what a scene of noise and glee,
And busy brisk anxiety!
There age and youth their pastime take
On the smooth ice that chains the lake:
The Highland chief, the Border knight,
In waving plumes, and baldricks bright,
Join in the bloodless friendly war,
The sounding stone to hurl afar.
The hair-breadth aim, the plaudits due,
The rap, the shout, the ardour grew,
Till drowsy day her curtain drew.

The youth, on cramps of polished steel,
Joined in the race, the curve, the wheel;
With arms outstretched, and foot aside,
Like lightning o'er the lake they glide;
And eastward far their impulse keep,
Like angels journeying o'er the deep.

When night her sprangled flag unfurled
Wide o'er a wan and sheeted world,
In keen debate homeward they hie,
For well they knew the Wake was nigh.

By mountain sheer, and column tall,
How solemn was that evening fall!
The air was calm, the stars were bright,
The hoar-frost flightered down the night;
But oft the listening groups stood still,
For spirits talked along the hill.[1]
The fairy tribes had gone to won
In southland climes beneath the sun;
By shady woods, and waters sheen,
And vales of everlasting green,
To sing of Scotia's woodlands wild,
Where human face had never smiled.
The ghost had left the haunted yew,
The wayward bogle fled the clough,
The darksome pool of crisp and foam
Was now no more the kelpie's home:
But Polar spirits sure had spread
O'er hills which native fays had fled;

[1] The echoes of evening, which are occasioned by the voices or mirth of different parties not aware of each other, have a curious and striking effect. I have known some country people terrified almost out of their senses at hearing voices and laughter among cliffs, where they knew it impossible for human being to reach. Some of the echoes around Edinburgh are extremely grand; what would they then be were the hills covered with wood? I have witnessed nothing more romantic than from a situation behind the Pleasance, where all the noises of the city are completely hushed, to hear the notes of the drum, trumpet, and bugle, poured from the cliffs of Salisbury, and the viewless cannons thundering from the rock. The effect is truly sublime.

For all along, from cliff and tree,
On Arthur's Hill, and Salisbury,
Came voices floating down the air
From viewless shades that lingered there:
The words were fraught with mystery;
Voices of men they could not be.
Youths turned their faces to the sky,
With beating heart, and bended eye;
Old chieftains walked with hastened tread
Loath that their hearts should bow to dread:
They feared the spirits of the hill
To sinful Scotland boded ill.

Orion up his baldrick drew,
The evening star was still in view;
Scarce had the Pleiads cleared the main,
Or Charles reyoked his golden wain,
When from the palace-turrets rang
The bugle's note with warning clang:
Each tower, each spire, in music spake,
"Haste, nobles, to Queen Mary's Wake."
The blooming maid ran to bedight,
In spangled lace, and robe of white,—
That graceful emblem of her youth,
Of guileless heart, and maiden truth.
The matron decked her candid frame
In moony brooch, and silk of flame;
And every earl and baron bold
Sparkled in clasp and loop of gold.
'Twas the last night of hope and fear,
That bards could sing, or Sovereign hear;
And just ere rose the Christmas sun,
The envied prize was lost or won.

The bard that night who foremost came
Was not enrolled, nor known his name:
A youth he was of manly mould,
Gentle as lamb, as lion bold;
But his fair face, and forehead high,
Glowed with intrusive modesty.

'Twas said, by bank of southland stream
Glided his youth in soothing dream;
The harp he loved, and wont to stray
Far to the wilds and woods away,
And sing to brooks that gurgled by,
Of maiden's form and maiden's eye:—
That, when this dream of youth was past,
Deep in the shade his harp he cast;
In busy life his cares beguiled;
His heart was true, and fortune smiled.
But when the Royal Wake began,
Joyful he came the foremost man,
To see the matchless bard approved,
And list the strains he once had loved.

Two nights had passed, the bards had sung—
Queen Mary's harp from ceiling hung,
On which was graved her lovely mold,
Beset with crowns and flowers of gold;
And many a gem of dazzling dye
Glowed on that prize to minstrel's eye.

The youth had heard each minstrel's strain,
And, fearing northern bard would gain,
To try his youthful skill was moved,
Not for himself, but friends he loved.

Mary Scott.

THE FOURTEENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

Lord Pringle's steed neighs in the stall,
His panoply is irksome grown,
His plumed helm hangs in the hall,
His broad claymore is berry brown.

No more his bugle's evening peal
Bids vassal arm and yeoman ride,
To drive the deer of Otterdale,
Or foray on the Border side.

Instead of whoop and battle knell,
Of warrior's song, and revel free,
Is heard the lute's voluptuous swell
Within the halls of Torwoodlee.

Sick lies his heart without relief;
'Tis love that breeds the warrior's woe,
For daughter of a froward chief,
A freebooter, his mortal foe.

[1] This ballad is founded on the old song of *The Grey Goss-hawk*. The catastrophe is the same, and happens at the same place, namely, in St. Mary's Churchyard. The castle of Tushilaw, where the chief scene of the tale is laid, stood on a shelve of the hill which overlooks the junction of the rivers Ettrick and Rankleburn. It is a singular situation, and seems to have been chosen for the extensive prospect of the valley, which it commands both to the east and west. It was the finest old baronial castle of which the Forest can boast, but the upper arches and turrets fell in of late years, with a crash that alarmed the whole neighbourhood. It is now a huge heap of ruins. Its last inhabitant was Adam Scott, who was long denominated in the south the *King of the Border*, but the courtiers called him the *King of Thieves*. King James V. acted upon the same principle with these powerful chiefs, most of whom disregarded his authority, as Bonaparte did with the sovereigns of Europe. He always managed matters so as to take each of them single-handed—made a rapid and secret march—overthrew one or two of them, and then returned directly home till matters were ripe for taking the advantage of some other. He marched on one day from Edinburgh to Meggatdale, accompanied by a chosen body of horsemen, surprised Peres Cockburn, a bold and capricious outlaw who tyrannized over those parts, hanged him over his own gate, sacked and burned his castle of Henderland, and divided his lands between two of his principal followers, Sir James Stuart and the Lord Hume. From Henderland he marched across the mountains by a wild unfrequented path, still called the *King's Road*, and appeared before the gates of Tushilaw about sunrise. Scott was completely taken by surprise; he, however, rushed to arms with his few friends who were present, and, after a desperate but unequal conflict, King James overcame him, plundered his castle of riches and stores to a prodigious amount, hanged the old Border king over a huge tree which is still growing in the corner of the castle-yard, and over which he himself had hanged many a one, carried his head with him in triumph to Edinburgh, and placed it on a pole over one of the ports. There was a long and deadly feud between the Scotts and the Kers in those days; the Pringles, Murrays, and others around, always joined with the latter, in order to keep down the too powerful Scotts, who were not noted as the best of neighbours.

But O, that maiden's form of grace,
And eye of love, to him were dear!
The smile that dimpled on her face
Was deadlier than the Border spear.

That form was not the poplar's stem,
That smile the dawning's purple line;
Nor was that eye the dazzling gem
That glows adown the Indian mine.

But would you praise the poplar pale,
Or morn in wreath of roses drest;
The fairest flower that woos the vale,
Or down that clothes the solan's breast?

A thousand times beyond, above,
What rapt enthusiast ever saw;
Compare them to that mould of love—
Young Mary Scott of Tushilaw!

The war-flame glows on Ettrick Pen,
Bounds forth the foray swift as wind,
And Tushilaw and all his men
Have left their homes afar behind.

O lady, lady, learn thy creed,
And mark the watch-dog's boisterous din
The abbot comes with book and bead—
O haste, and let the father in!

And lady, mark his locks so gray,
His beard so long, and colour wan;
O, he has mourned for many a day,
And sorrowed o'er the sins of man!

And yet so stately is his mein,
His step so firm, and breast so bold;
His brawny leg and form, I ween,
Are wondrous for a man so old.

Short was his greeting, short and low,
His blessing short as prayer could be;
But oft he sighed, and boded woe,
And spoke of sin and misery.

To shrift, to shrift, now ladies all,
Your prayers and Ave Marias learn;
Haste trembling to the vesper hall,
For ah! the priest is dark and stern.

Short was the task of lady old,
Short as confession well could be;
The abbot's orisons were cold,
His absolutions frank and free.

Go, Mary Scott, thy spirit meek
Lay open to the searcher's eye;
And let the tear bedew thy cheek,
Thy sins are of a crimson dye.

For many a lover thou hast slain,
And many yet lie sick for thee—
Young Gilmanscleuch and Deloraine,
And Pringle, lord of Torwoodlee.

Tell every wish thy bosom near,
No other sin, dear maid, hast thou,
And well the abbot loves to hear
Thy plights of love and simple vow.

"Why stays my Mary Scott so long!
What guilt can youth and beauty wail?
Of fervent thought and passion strong,
Heavens! what a sickening tedious tale!"

O lady, cease; the maiden's mind,
Though pure as morning's cloudless beam,
A crime in every wish can find,
In noontide glance, and midnight dream.

To woman's heart when fair and free,
Her sins seem great and manifold;
When sunk in guilt and misery,
No crime can then her soul behold.

'Tis sweet to see the opening flower
Spread its fair bosom to the sun;
'Tis sweet to hear in vernal bower
The thrush's earliest hymn begun:

But sweeter far the prayer that wrings
The tear from maiden's beaming eye;
And sweeter far the hymn she sings
In grateful holy ecstasy.

The mass was said, but cold and dry
That mass to heaven the father sent;
With book, and bead, and rosary,
The abbot to his chamber went.

The watch-dog rests with folded eye
Beneath the portal's gray festoon;
The wildered Ettrick wanders by,
Loud murmuring to the careless moon.

The warder lists with hope and dread
Far distant shout of fray begun;
The cricket tunes his tiny reed,
And harps behind the embers dun.

Why does the warder bend his head,
And silent stand the casement near?
The cricket stops his little reed,
The sound of gentle step to hear.

O, many a wight from Border brake
Has reaved the drowsy warden round;
And many a daughter lain awake,
When parents trowed her sleeping sound.

The abbot's bed is well down spread,
The abbot's bed is soft and fair;
The abbot's bed is cold as lead—
For why?—the abbot is not there.

Was that the blast of bugle, borne
Far on the night-wind, wavering shrill?
'Tis nothing but the shepherd's horn,
That keeps the watch on Cacra hill.

What means the warder's answering note?
The moon is west, 'tis near the day;
I thought I heard the warrior's shout;
'Tis time the abbot were away!

The bittern mounts the morning air
And rings the sky with quavering croon;
The watch-dog sallies from his lair,
And bays the wind and setting moon.

'Tis not the breeze, nor bittern's wail,
Has roused the guarder from his den;
Along the bank, in belt and mail,
Come Tushilaw and all his men.

The abbot from his casement, saw
The forest chieftain's proud array;
He heard the voice of Tushilaw—
The abbot's heart grew cold as clay!

"Haste, maidens, call my lady fair,
That room may for my warriors be;
And bid my daughter come and share
The cup of joy with them and me.

"Say we have fought and won the fray,
Have lowered our haughty foeman's pride;
And we have driven the richest prey
That ever lowed by Ettrick side."

To hear a tale of vanquished foes
His lady came right cheerfully;
And Mary Scott, like morning rose,
Stood blushing at her father's knee.

Fast flowed the warrior's ruthless tale,
And aye the red cup passed between;
But Mary Scott grew lily pale,
And trembled like the aspen green.

"Now, lady, give me welcome cheer,
Queen of the Border thou shalt be;
For I have brought thee gold and gear,
And humbled haughty Torwoodlee.

"I beat his yeomen in the glen;
I loosed his horses from the stall;
I slew the blood-hound in his den,
And sought the chief through tower and hall.

"'Tis said, in hamlet mean and dark,
Nightly he lies with leman dear;
O, I would give ten thousand mark,
To see his head upon my spear!

"Go, maidens, every mat be spread
On heather haum, or roegrass heap;
And make for me the scarlet bed,
For I have need of rest and sleep."—

"Nay, my good lord, make other choice,
In that you cannot rest to-day;
For there in peaceful slumber lies
A holy abbot, old and gray."

The chieftain's cheek to crimson grew,
Dropt from his hand the rosy wine—
"An abbot! curse the canting crew!
An abbot sleep in couch of mine!

"Now, lady, as my soul shall thrive,
I'd rather trust my child and thee
With my two greatest foes alive,
The King of Scots and Torwoodlee.

"The lazy hoard of Melrose vale
Has brought my life, my all to stake:
O, lady! I have heard a tale,
The thought o't makes my heart to ache!

"Go, warriors, hale the villain forth,
Bring not his loathful form to me;
The gate stands open to the north,
The rope hangs o'er the gallows-tree.

"There shall the burning breeze of noon
Rock the old sensual sluggard blind;
There let him swing, till sun and moon
Have three times left the world behind."

O abbot, abbot, say thy prayers,
With orisons load every breath;
The Forest trooper's on the stairs,
To drag thee to a shameful death.

O abbot, abbot, quit thy bed,
Ill armed art thou to meet the strife;
Haste, don thy beard, and quoif thy head,
And guard the door for death or life.

Thy arm is firm, thy heart is stout.
Yet thou canst neither fight nor flee;
But beauty stands thy guard without,—
Yes, beauty weeps and pleads for thee.

Proud, ruthless man, by vengeance driven,
Regardless hears a brother plead;
Regardless sees the brand of Heaven
Red quivering o'er his guilty head:

But once let woman's soothing tongue
Implore his help or clemency;
Around him let her arms be flung,
Or at his feet her bended knee—

The world's a shadow! vengeance sleeps!
The child of reason stands revealed—
When beauty pleads, when woman weeps,
He is not man who scorns to yield.

Stern Tushilaw is gone to sleep,
Laughing at woman's dread of sin;
But first he bade his warriors keep
All robbers out, and abbots in.

The abbot from his casement high
Looked out to see the peep of day;
The scene that met the abbot's eye
Filled him with wonder and dismay.

'Twas not the dews of dawning mild,
The mountain's hues of silver gray,
Nor yet the Ettrick's windings wild,
By belted holm and bosky brae;

Nor moorland Rankleburn, that raved
By covert, clough, and greenwood shaw;
Nor dappled flag of day, that waved
In streamers pale from Gilmanslaw;

But many a doubted ox there lay
At rest upon the castle lea;
And there he saw his gallant gray,
And all the steeds of Torwoodlee.

"Beshrew the wont!" the abbot said,
"The charge runs high for lodging here;
The guard is deep, the path way-laid,
My homilies shall cost me dear.

"Come well, come woe, with dauntless core
I'll kneel, and con my breviary;
If Tushilaw is versed in lore,
'Twill be an awkward game with me."—

Now Tushilaw he waked and slept,
And dreamed and thought till noontide hour;
But aye this query upmost kept,
"What seeks the abbot in my tower?"

Stern Tushilaw came down the stair
With doubtful and indignant eye,
And found the holy man at prayer,
With book, and cross, and rosary.

"To book, to book, thou reaver red,
Of absolution thou hast need;
The sword of Heaven hangs o'er thy head,
Death is thy doom, and hell thy meed!"

"I'll take my chance, thou priest of sin,
Thy absolutions I disdain;
But I will noose thy bearded chin,
If thus thou talk'st to me again.

"Declare thy business and thy name,
Or short the route to thee is given!"—
"The abbot I of Coldinghame,
My errand is the cause of Heaven."—

"That shalt thou prove ere we two part;
Some robber thou, or royal spy:
But, villain, I will search thy heart,
And chain thee in the deep to lie!

"Hence with thy rubbish, best and ban,
Whinyards to keep the weak in awe;
The scorn of Heaven, the shame of man—
No books nor beads for Tushilaw!"

"Oh! lost to mercy, faith, and love!
Thy bolts and chains are nought to me;
I'll call an angel from above,
That soon will set the prisoner free."—

Bold Tushilaw, o'er strone and steep,
Pursues the roe and dusky deer;
The abbot lies in dungeon deep,
The maidens wail, the matrons fear.

The sweetest flower on Ettrick shaw
Bends its fair form o'er grated keep;
Young Mary Scott of Tushilaw
Sleeps but to sigh, and wakes to weep.

Bold Tushilaw, with horn and hound,
Pursues the deer o'er holt and lea;
And rides and rules the Border round,
From Philiphaugh to Gilnockye.

His page rode down by Melrose fair,
His page rode down by Coldinghame;
But not a priest was missing there,
Nor abbot, friar, nor monk of name.

The evening came; it was the last
The abbot in this world should see:
The bonds are firm, the bolts are fast,
No angel comes to set him free.

Yes, at the stillest hour of night
Softly unfolds the iron door:
Beamed through the gloom unwonted light,
That light a beauteous angel bore.

Fair was the form that o'er him hung,
And fair the hands that set him free;
The trembling whispers of her tongue
Softer than seraph's melody.

The abbot's soul was all on flame,
Wild transport through his bosom ran;
For never angel's airy frame
Was half so sweet to mortal man.

Why walks young Mary Scott so late,
In veil and cloak of cramasye?
The porter opens wide the gate,
His bonnet moves, and bends his knee.

Long may the wondering porter wait,
Before the lady form return:
"Speed, abbot, speed, nor halt nor bate,
Nor look thou back to Rankleburn!"

The day arrives, the ladies plead
In vain for yon mysterious wight;
For Tushilaw his doom decreed,
Were he an abbot, lord, or knight.

The chieftain called his warriors stout,
And ranged them round the gallows-tree,
Then bade them bring the abbot out,
The fate of fraud that all might see.

The men return of sense bereft,
Falter their tongues, their eye-balls glare:
The door was locked, the fetters left—
All close! the abbot was not there!

The wondering warriors bow to God,
And matins to the Virgin hum;
But Tushilaw he gloomed and strode,
And walked into the castle dumb.

But to the Virgin's sacred name
The vow was paid in many a cell;
And many a rich oblation came
For that amazing miracle.

Lord Pringle walked his glens alone,
Nor flock nor lowing herd he saw;
But even the king upon the throne
Quaked at the name of Tushilaw.

Lord Pringle's heart was all on flame,
Nor peace nor joy his bosom knew,
'Twas for the kindest, sweetest dame,
That ever brushed the forest dew.

Gone is one month with smile and sigh,
With dream by night and wish by day,
A second came with moistened eye;
Another came and passed away.

Why is the flower of yonder pile
Bending its stem to court decay,
And Mary Scott's benignant smile
Like sunbeam in a winter-day?

Sometimes her colour's like the rose,
Sometimes 'tis like the lily pale;
The flower that in the Forest grows
Is fallen before the summer gale.

A mother's fostering breast is warm,
And dark her doubts of love I ween:
For why?—she felt its early harm—
A mother's eye is sharp and keen.

Tis done! the woman stands revealed!
Stern Tushilaw is waked to see;
The bearded priest so well concealed,
Was Pringle lord of Torwoodlee!

Oh, never was the thunder's jar,
The red tornado's wasting wing,
Nor all the elemental war,
Like fury of the Border king.

He laughed aloud—his falchion eyed—
A laugh of burning vengeance born!—
"Does thus the coward trow," he cried,
"To hold his conqueror's power to scorn?

"Thinks Tushilaw of maids or wives,
Or such a thing as Torwoodlee?
Had Mary Scott a thousand lives,
These lives were all too few for me.

"Ere midnight, in the secret cave,
This sword shall pierce her bosom's core,
Though I go childless to my grave,
And rue the deed for evermore.

"O, had I lulled the imp to rest
When first she lisped her name to me,
Or pierced her little guileless breast
When smiling on her nurse's knee!"

"Just is your vengeance, my good lord,
'Tis just and meet our daughter die;
For sharper than a foeman's sword
Is family shame and injury.

"But trust the ruthless deed to me;
I have a vial potent, good:
Unmeet that all the Scots should see
A daughter's corse embalmed in blood;

"Unmeet her gallant kinsmen know
The guilt of one so fair and young;
No cup should to her memory flow,
No requiem o'er her grave be sung.

"My potent draught has erst proved true
Beneath my own and husband's eye;
Trust me, ere falls the morning dew,
In dreamless sleep shall Mary lie."—

"Even go thy way, thy words are true,
I knew thy dauntless soul before;
But list—if thou deceivest me too,
Thou hast a head! I say no more."

Stern Tushilaw strode o'er the ley,
And, wondering, by the twilight saw
A crystal tear drop from his eye,
The first ere shed by Tushilaw.

O, grievous are the bonds of steel,
And blasted hope 'tis hard to prove;
More grievous far it is to feel
Ingratitude from those we love.

"What brings my lady mother here,
Pale as the morning shower and cold?
In her dark eye why stands the tear?
Why in her hand a cup of gold?"

"My Mary, thou art ill at rest,
Fervid and feverish is thy blood;
Still yearns o'er thee thy mother's breast,
Take this, my child, 'tis for thy good!"—

O sad, sad was young Mary's plight!
She took the cup—no word she spake:
She had even wished that very night
To sleep, and never more to wake.

She took the cup—she drank it dry,
Then pillowed soft her beauteous head,
And calmly watched her mother's eye;
But, O, that eye was hard to read!

Her moistened eyes, so mild and meek,
Soon sunk their auburn fringe beneath;
The ringlets on her damask cheek
Heaved gentler with her stealing breath.

She turned her face unto the wall,
Her colour changed to pallid clay;
Long ere the dews began to fall,
The flower of Ettrick lifeless lay!

Why underneath her winding-sheet
Does broidered silk her form enfold?
Why are cold Mary's buskined feet
All laced with belts and bands of gold?

"What boots to me those robes so gay?
To wear them now no child have I:
They should have graced her bridal day,
Now they must in the churchyard lie!

"I thought to see my daughter ride,
In golden gear and cramasye
To Mary's fane, the loveliest bride
E'er to the Virgin bent the knee.

"Now I may by her funeral wain
Ride silent o'er the mountain gray:
Her revel hall the gloomy fane,
Her bridal bed the cheerless clay!"

Why that rich snood, with plume and lace,
Round Mary's lifeless temples drawn?
Why is the napkin o'er her face,
A fragment of the lily lawn?

"My Mary has another home;
And far, far though her journey be,
When she to Paradise shall come,
Then will my child remember me."

O, many a flower was round her spread,
And many a pearl and diamond bright,
And many a window round her head
Shed on her form a bootless light!

Lord Pringle sat on Maygill brae,
Pondering on war and vengeance meet;
The Cadan toiled in narrow way,
The Tweed rolled far beneath his feet.

Not Tweed, by gulf and whirlpool mazed,
Through dark wood-glen, by him was seen;
For still his thought-set eye was raised
To Ettrick mountains, wild and green.

Sullen he sat, unstaid, unblest;
He thought of battle, broil, and blood;
He never crossed, he never wist,
Till by his side a Palmer stood.

"Haste, my good lord, this letter read,
Ill bodes it listless thus to be;
Upon a die I've set my head,
And brought this letter far to thee."

Lord Pringle looked the letter on,
His face grew pale as winter sky;
But, ere the half of it was done,
The tear of joy stood in his eye.

A purse he to the Palmer threw,
Mounted the cleft of aged tree,
Three times aloud his bugle blew,
And hasted home to Torwoodlee.

'Twas scarcely past the hour of noon
When first the foray whoop began;
And, in the wan light of the moon,
Through March and Teviotdale it ran.

Far to the south it spread away,
Startled the hind by fold and tree;
And aye the watchword of the fray
Was "Ride for Ker and Torwoodlee!"

When next the day began to fade,
The warriors round their chieftains range;
And many a solemn vow they made,
And many an oath of fell revenge.

The Pringles' plumes indignant dance—
It was a gallant sight to see;
And many a Ker, with sword and lance,
Stood rank and file on Torwoodlee.

As they fared up yon craggy glen,
Where Tweed sweeps round the Thorny hill,
Old Gideon Murray and his men
The foray joined with right good-will.

They hasted up by Plora side,
And north above Mount-Benger turn,
And loathly forced with them to ride
Black Douglas of the Craigy-burn.

When they came nigh Saint Mary's lake,
The day-sky glimmered on the dew;
They hid their horses in the brake,
And lurked in heath and braken clough.

The lake one purple valley lay,
Where tints of glowing light were seen;
The ganza waved his cuneal way,
With yellow oar and quoif of green.

The dark cock bayed above the coomb,
Throned mid the wavy fringe of gold,
Unwreathed from dawning's fairy loom,
In many a soft vermilion fold.

The tiny skiffs of silver mist
Lingered along the slumbering vale;
Belled the gray stag with fervid breast
High on the moors of Meggat-dale.

There, hid in clough and hollow den,
Gazing around the still sublime,
There lay Lord Pringle and his men
On beds of heath and moorland thyme.

That morning found rough Tushilaw
In all the father's guise appear;
An end of all his hopes he saw
Shrouded in Mary's gilded bier.

No eye could trace without concern
The suffering warrior's troubled look;
The throbs that heaved his bosom stern
No ear could bear, no heart could brook.

"Woe be to thee, thou wicked dame!
My Mary's prayers and accents mild
Might well have rendered vengeance lame—
This hand could ne'er have slain my child!

"But thou, in frenzied fatal hour,
Reft the sweet life thou gavest, away,
And crushed to earth the fairest flower
That ever breathed the breeze of day.

"My all is lost, my hope is fled,
The sword shall ne'er be drawn for me;
Unblest, unhonoured, my gray head—
My child! would I had died for thee!"—

The bell tolls o'er a new-made grave;
The lengthened funeral train is seen
Stemming the Yarrow's silver wave,
And darkening Dryhope holms so green.

When nigh the Virgin's fane they drew;
Just by the verge of holy ground,
The Kers and Pringles left the clough,
And hemmed the wondering Scotts around.

Vassal and peasant, seized with dread,
Sped off, and looked not once behind;
And all who came for wine and bread,
Fled like the chaff before the wind.

But all the Scotts together flew,
(For every Scott of name was there),
In sullen mood their weapons drew,
And back to back for fight prepare.

Rough was the onset—boast, nor threat,
Nor word, was heard from friend or foe;
At once began the work of fate,
With perilous thrust and deadly blow.

O, but the Harden lads were true,
And bore them bravely in the broil!
The doughty laird of wild Buccleuch
Raged like a lion in the toil.

His sword on bassenet was broke,
The blood was streaming to his heel,
But soon, to ward the fatal stroke,
Up rattled twenty blades of steel.

Young Raeburn tilted gallantly;
But Ralph of Gilmanscleuch was slain,
Philip and Hugh of Baillilee,
And William, laird of Deloraine.

Red Will of Thirlestane came on
With his long sword and sullen eye,
Jealous of ancient honours won;
Woe to the wight that came him nigh!

He was the last the ranks to break,
And flying, fought full desperately;
At length within his feudal lake
He stood, and fought unto the knee.

Wild looked he round from side to side;
No friendly skiff was there that day!
For why: the knight in bootless pride,
Had driven them from the wave away.

Sore did he rue the stern decree!
Red rolled the billow from the west,
And fishes swam indignantly
Deep o'er the hero's boardly breast.

When loud has roared the wintry storm,
Till winds have ceased, and rains are gone,
There oft the shepherd's trembling form
Stands gazing o'er gigantic bone,

Pondering of Time's unstaying tide;
Of ancient chiefs by kinsmen slain:
Of feudal rights, and feudal pride,
And reckless Will of Thirlestane.

But long shall Ettrick rue the strife
That reft her brave and generous son,
Who ne'er in all his restless life
Did unbecoming thing but one.

Old Tushilaw, with sword in hand,
And heart to fiercest woes a prey,
Seemed courting every foeman's brand,
And fought in hottest of the fray.

In vain the gallant kinsmen stood
Wedged in a firm and bristled ring;
Their funeral weeds are bathed in blood,
No corslets round their bosoms cling.

Against the lance and helmed file
Their courage, might, and skill were vain;
Short was the conflict, short the while
Ere all the Scotts were bound or slain.

When first the hostile band upsprung,
The body in the church was laid,
Where vows were made, and requiems sung,
By matron, monk, and weeping maid.

Lord Pringle came—before his eye
The monks and maidens kneeled in fear;
But Lady Tushilaw stood by,
And pointed to her Mary's bier!

"Thou lord of guile and malice keen,
What boots this doleful work to thee?
Could Scotland such a pair have seen
As Mary Scott and Torwoodlee?"

Lord Pringle came—no word he spake,
Nor owned the pangs his bosom knew;
But his full heart was like to break
In every throb his bosom drew.

"O I had weened with fondest heart—
Woe to the guileful friend who lied!—
This day should join us ne'er to part,
This day that I should win my bride!

"But I will see that face so meek,
Cold, pale, and lifeless though it be;
And I will kiss that comely cheek,
Once sweeter than the rose to me."

With trembling hand he raised the lid,
Sweet was the perfume round that flew;
For there were strewed the roses red,
And every flower the forest knew.

He drew the fair lawn from her face,
'Twas decked with many a costly wreath;
And still it wore a soothing grace
Even in the chill abodes of death.

And aye he prest the cheek so white,
And aye he kissed the lips beloved,
Till pitying maidens wept outright,
And even the frigid monks were moved.

Why starts Lord Pringle to his knee?
Why bend his eyes with watchful strain?
The maidens shriek his mien to see;
The startled priests inquire in vain.

Was that a sob, an earthly sigh,
That heaved the flowers so lightly shed?—
'Twas but the wind that wandered by,
And kissed the bosom of the dead!

Are these the glowing tints of life
O'er Mary's cheek that come and fly?
Ah, no! the red flowers round are rife,
The rose-bud flings its softened dye.

Why grows the gazer's sight so dim?
Stay, dear illusion, still beguile!
Thou art worth crowns and worlds to him—
Last, dear delusion, last a while!

Short was thy sway, frenzied and short,
For ever fell the veil on thee;
Thy startling form, of fears the sport,
Vanished in sweet reality!

'Tis past! and darkly stand revealed
A mother's cares and purpose deep:
That kiss, the last adieu that sealed,
Waked Mary from her death-like sleep!

Slowly she raised her form of grace,
Her eyes no ray conceptive flung;
And O, her mild, her languid face,
Was like a flower too early sprung!

"Oh, I lie sick and weary here!
My heart is bound in moveless chain;
Another cup, my mother dear,
I cannot sleep though I would fain!"—

She drank the wine with calm delay,
She drank the wine with pause and sigh:
Slowly, as wakes the dawning day,
Dawned long-lost thought in Mary's eye.

She looked at pall, she looked at bier,
At altar, shrine, and rosary;
She saw her lady mother near,
And at her side brave Torwoodlee.

'Twas all a dream, nor boded good,
A phantom of the fevered brain:
She laid her down in moaning mood,
To sooth her woes in sleep again.

Needs not to paint that joyful hour,
The nuptial vow, the bridal glee—
How Mary Scott, the Forest flower,
Was borne a bride to Torwoodlee.

Needs not to say, how warriors prayed
When Mary glided from the dome;
They thought the Virgin's holy shade
In likeness of the dead had come.

Diamond and ruby rayed her waist,
And twinkled round her brow so fair;
She wore more gold upon her breast
Than would have bought the hills of Yair.

A foot so light, a form so meet,
Ne'er trode Saint Mary's lonely lea;
A bride so gay, a face so sweet,
The Yarrow braes shall never see.

Old Tushilaw deigned not to smile,
No grateful word his tongue could say;
He took one kiss, blest her the while,
Wiped his dark eye, and turned away.

The Scotts were freed, and peace restored;
Each Scott, each Ker, each Pringle swore—
Swore by his name, and by his sword,
To be firm friends for evermore.

Lord Pringle's hills were stocked anew,
Drove after drove came nightly free;
But many a Border baron knew
Whence came the dower to Torwoodlee.

Scarce had the closing measure rung,
When from the ring the minstrel sprung;
O'er foot of maid, and cane of man,
Three times he foundered as he ran,
And his gilt harp, of flowery frame,
Left ready for the next that came.
Loud were the plaudits—all the fair
Their eyes turned to the royal chair:
They looked again,—no bard was there!
But whisper, smile, and question ran,
Around the ring anent the man;
While all the nobles of the south
Lauded the generous stranger youth.

The next was bred on southern shore,
Beneath the mists of Lammermore;
And long, by Nith and crystal Tweed,
Had taught the Border youth to read:
The strains of Greece, the bard of Troy,
Were all his theme, and all his joy.

Well toned his voice of wars to sing;
His hair was dark as raven's wing;
His eye an intellectual lance,
No heart could bear its searching glance:
But every bard to him was dear;
His heart was kind, his soul sincere.

When first of Royal Wake he heard,
Forthwith it chained his sole regard:
It was his thought, his hourly theme,
His morning prayer, his midnight dream.
Knights, dames, and squires of each degree,
He deemed as fond of songs as he,
And talked of them continually.
But when he heard the Highland strain,
Scarce could his breast his soul contain;
'Twas all unequalled, and would make
Immortal Bards, immortal Wake!
About Dunedin streets he ran,
Each knight he met, each maid, each man,
In field, in alley, tower, or hall,
The Wake was first, the Wake was all.

Alike to him the south or north,
So high he held the minstrel worth;
So high his ardent mind was wrought,
Once of himself he scarcely thought.
Dear to his heart the strain sublime,
The strain admired in ancient time:
And of his minstrel honours proud,
He strung his harp too high, too loud.

King Edward's Dream.

THE FIFTEENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

The heath-cock had whirred at the break of the morn,
The moon of her tassels of silver was shorn,
When hoary King Edward lay tossing in ire,
His blood in a ferment, his bosom on fire:
His battle-files, stretched o'er the valley, were still
As Eden's pine forests that darkened the hill.

He slept—but his visions were loathly and grim;
How quivered his lip! and how quaked every limb!
His dull-moving eye showed how troubled his rest,
And deep were the throbs of his labouring breast.

He saw the Scot's banner red streaming on high;
The fierce Scottish warriors determined and nigh;
Their columns of steel, and, bright gleaming before,
The lance, the broad target, and Highland claymore.
And, lo! at their head, in stern glory appeared
That hero of heroes so hated and feared;
'Twas the exile of Rachrin that led the array,
And Wallace's spirit was pointing the way:
His eye was a torch, beaming ruin and wrath,
And graved on his helmet was—*Vengeance or Death!*

In far Ethiopia's desert domain,
Where whirlwinds new mountains up-pile on the plain,
Their crested brown billows, fierce curling on high,
O'ershadow the sun, and are tossed to the sky;
But, meeting each other, they burst and recoil,
Mix, thunder, and sink, with a reeling turmoil:
As dreadful the onset that Edward beheld,
As fast his brave legions were heaped on the field.

The plaided blue Highlander, swift as the wind,
Spread terror before him, and ruin behind:
Thick clouds of blood-vapour brood over the slain,
And Pembroke and Howard are stretched on the plain.

The chieftain he hated, all covered with blood,
Still nearer and nearer approached where he stood;
He could not retreat, and no succour was near—
"Die, scorpion!" he cried, and pursued his career.
The king felt the iron retreat from the wound,
No hand to uphold him, he sunk on the ground:
His spirit, escaped on the wings of the wind,
Left terror, confusion, and carnage behind,
Till on the green Pentland he thought he sat lone,
And pondered on troubles and times that were gone.

He looked over meadow, broad river, and downe,
From Ochil's fair mountains to Lammermore brown;
He still found his heart and desires were the same;
He wished to leave Scotland nor sceptre nor name.

He thought as he lay on the green mountain thyme,
A spirit approached him in manner sublime:
At first she appeared like a streamer of light,
But still, as she neared, she was formed to his sight.
Her robe was the blue silken veil of the sky,
The drop of the amethyst deepened its dye;
Her crown was a helmet, emblazoned with pearl;
Her mantle the sunbeam, her bracelets the beryl;
Her hands and her feet like the bright burning levin;
Her face was the face of an angel from heaven:
Around her the winds and the echoes grew still,
And rainbows were formed in the cloud of the hill.

Like music that floats o'er the soft heaving deep,
When twilight has lulled all the breezes asleep,
The wild fairy airs in our forests that rung,
Or hymn of the sky by a seraph when sung;
So sweet were the tones on the fancy that broke,
When the Guardian of Scotland's proud mountains thus spoke:—

[1] The scene of this ballad is on the banks of the Eden in Cumberland, a day's march from Burgh, on the sands of Solway, where King Edward I. died, in the midst of an expedition against the Scots, in which he had solemnly sworn to extirpate them as a nation.

"What boots, mighty Edward, thy victories won?
'Tis over—thy sand of existence is run;
Thy laurels are faded, dispersed in the blast;
Thy soul from the bar of Omnipotence cast,
To wander bewildered o'er mountain and plain,
O'er lands thou hast steeped with the blood of the slain.

"I heard of thy guerdon, I heard it on high:
Thou'rt doomed on these mountains to linger and lie,
The mark of the tempest, the sport of the wind—
The tempest of conscience, the storm of the mind—
Till people thou'st hated, and sworn to subdue,
Triumphant from bondage shall burst in thy view,
Their sceptre and liberty bravely regain,
And climb to renown over mountains of slain.

"I thought (and I joined my endeavours to thine),
The time was arrived when the two should combine;
For 'tis known that they will 'mong the hosts of the sky,
And we thought that blest era of concord was nigh.
But ages unborn yet shall flit on the wing,
And Scotland to England ere then give a king;
A father to monarchs, whose flourishing sway
The ocean and ends of the earth shall obey.

"See yon little hamlet o'ershadowed with smoke,
See yon hoary battlement throned on the rock,
Even there shall a city in splendour break forth,
The haughty Dunedin, the Queen of the North;
There learning shall flourish, and liberty smile,
The awe of the world, and the pride of the isle.

"But thy lonely spirit shall roam in dismay,
And weep o'er thy labours so soon to decay.
In yon western plain, where thy power overthrew
The bulwarks of Caledon, valiant and few;
Where beamed the red falchion of ravage and wrath;
Where tyranny, horsed on the dragons of death,
Rode ruthless through blood of the honoured and just,
When Græme and brave Stuart lay bleeding in dust—
The wailings of liberty pierced the sky;
The Eternal, in pity, averted his eye!

"Even there the dread power of thy nations combined,
Proud England, green Erin, and Normandy joined,
Exulting in numbers, and dreadful array,
Led on by Carnarvon, to Scotland away,
As thick as the snow-flakes that pour from the pole,
Or silver-maned waves on the ocean that roll:
By a handful of heroes, all desperate driven,
Impelled by the might and the vengeance of Heaven—
By them shall these legions be all overborne,
And melt from the field like the mist of the morn.
The Thistle shall rear her rough front to the sky,
And the Rose and the Shamrock at Carron shall die.

"How couldst thou imagine those spirits of flame
Would stoop to oppression, to slavery, and shame?
Ah! never; the lion may couch to thy sway,
The mighty leviathan bend and obey;
But the Scots, round their king and broad banner unfurled,
Their mountains will keep against thee and the world."

King Edward awoke with a groan and a start,
The vision was vanished, but not from his heart!
His courage was high, but his vigour was gone;
He cursed the Scots nation, and bade them lead on.
His legions moved on like a cloud of the west;
But fierce was the fever that boiled in his breast:
On sand of the Solway they rested his bed,
Where the soul of the king and the warrior fled.
He heard not the sound of the evening curfew;
But the whisper that died on his tongue was—
"Subdue!"

The bard had sung so bold and high,
While patriot fire flashed from his eye,
That ere King Edward won to rest,
Or sheet was spread above his breast,
The harp-strings jarred in wild mis-tone;
The minstrel throbbed, his voice was gone.
Upon his harp he leaned his head,
And softly from the ring was led.

The next was from a western vale,
Where Nith winds slowly down the dale;
Where play the waves o'er golden grain,
Like mimic billows of the main.
Of the old elm his harp was made,
That bent o'er Cluden's loneliest shade:
No gilded sculpture round her flamed,
For his own hand that harp had framed,
In stolen hours, when, labour done,
He strayed to view the parting sun.
O, when the toy to him so fair,
Began to form beneath his care,
How danced his youthful heart with joy!
How constant grew the dear employ!
The sun would chamber in the Ken;
The red star rise o'er Locherben;
The solemn moon in sickly hue,
Waked from her eastern couch of dew,
Would half way gain the vault on high,
Bathe in the Nith, slow stealing by,
And still the bard his task would ply.

When his first notes, from covert gray,
Arrested maiden on her way;
When ceased the reaper's evening tale,
And paused the shepherd of the dale—
Bootless all higher worldly bliss.
To crown our minstrel's happiness!
What all the joys by fortune given,
To cloyless song, the gift of Heaven?

That harp could make the matron stare,
Bristle the peasant's hoary hair,
Make patriot breasts with ardour glow,
And warrior pant to meet the foe;

And long by Nith the maidens young
Shall chant the strains their minstrel sung:
At ewe-bught, or at evening fold,
When resting on the daisied wold,
Combing their locks of waving gold,
Oft the fair group, enrapt, shall name
Their lost, their darling Cunninghame.
His was a song beloved in youth—
A tale of weir—a tale of truth.

Dumlanrig.

THE SIXTEENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

Who's he that at Dumlanrig's gate
Hollas so loud, and raps so late?
Nor warder's threat, nor porter's growl,
Question, nor watch-dog's angry howl,
He once regards; but rap and call,
Thundering alternate, shake the wall.
The captive, stretched in dungeon deep,
Waked from his painful visioned sleep,
His meagre form from pavement raised,
And listened to the sounds amazed:
Both bayle and keep rang with the din,
And Douglas heard the noise within.

"Ho! rise, Dumlanrig! all's at stake!
"Ho! rise, Dumlanrig! Douglas, wake!
Blow, warder—blow thy warning shrill,
Light up the beacon on the hill,
For round thee reaves thy ruthless foe—
Arise, Dumlanrig! Douglas, ho!"—

His fur-cloak round him Douglas threw,
And to the crennel eager flew.
"What news, what news, thou stalwart groom,
Who thus, in midnight's deepest gloom,
Bring'st to my gate the loud alarm
Of foray wide and country harm?
What are thy dangers?—what thy fears?
Say out thy message—Douglas hears."

"Haste, Douglas! Douglas, arm with speed,
And mount thy fleetest battle steed;
For Lennox, with the southern host,
Whom thou hast baulked and curbed the most,
Like locusts from the Solway blown,
Are spread upon thy mountains brown:
Broke from their camp in search of prey,
They drive thy flocks and herds away;
Roused by revenge, and hunger keen,
They've swept the hills of fair Dalveen;
Nor left thee bullock, goat, or steer,
On all the holms of Durisdeer.

"One troop came to my father's hall;
They burnt our tower—they took our all.
My dear, my only sister May,
By force the ruffians bore away;
Nor kid nor lamb bleats in the glen,
Around all lonely Locherben!

"My twenty men, I have no moe,
Eager to cross the roaming foe,
Well armed with hauberk and broadsword,
Keep ward at Cample's rugged ford.
Before they bear their prey across,
Some Southrons shall their helmets lose,
If not the heads those helmets shield,—
O, haste thee, Douglas, to the field!"—
With that his horse around he drew,
And down the path like lightning flew.

"Arm," cried the Douglas, "one and all!"
And vanished from the echoing wall.
"Arm!" was the word; along it ran
Through manor, bayle, and barbican;
And clank and clatter burst at once
From every loop of hall and sconce.
With whoop of groom, and warder's call,
And prancing steeds, 'twas hurry all.

At first, like thunder's distant tone,
The rattling din came rolling on:
Echoed Dumlanrig woods around;
Louder and louder swelled the sound,
Till like the sheeted flame of wonder,
That rends the shoals of heaven asunder.

When first the word, "To arms!" was give
Glowed all the eastern porch of heaven;
A wreathy cloud of orient brown
Had heralded the rising moon,
Whose verge was like a silver bow,
Bending o'er Ganna's lofty brow;
And ere above the mountain blue
Her wasted orb was rolled in view,
A thousand men, in armour sheen,
Stood ranked upon Dumlanrig green.

The Nith they stemmed in firm array;
For Cample-ford they bent their way.

[1] This ballad relates to a well-known historical fact, of which tradition has preserved an accurate and feasible detail. The battles took place two or three years subsequent to the death of King James V. I have heard that it is succinctly related by some historian, but I have forgot who it is. Holinshed gives a long bungling account of the matter, but places the one battle a year before the other, whereas it does not appear that Lennox made two excursions into Nithsdale at the head of the English forces, or fought two bloody battles with the laird of Dumlanrig on the same ground, as the historian would insinuate. He says, that Dumlanrig, after pursuing them cautiously for some time, was overthrown in attempting to cross a ford of the river too rashly; that he lost two of his principal kinsmen, and two hundred of his followers; had several spears broken upon his body, and escaped only by the goodness of his horse. The battle which took place next night, he relates as having happened next year; but it must be visible to every reader that he is speaking of the same incidents in the annals of both years. In the second engagement he acknowledges that Dumlanrig defeated the English horse, which he attributes to a desertion from the latter, but that, after pursuing them as far as Dalswinton, they were joined by the foot, and retrieved the day. The account given of the battles, by Lesleus and Fran. Thin, seems to have been so different, that they have misled the chronologer; the names of the towns and villages appearing to him so different, whereas a local knowledge of the country would have convinced him that both accounts related to the same engagement.

Than Douglas and his men that night,
Never saw yeoman nobler sight;
Mounted on tall curvetting steed,
He rode undaunted at their head;
His shadow on the water still,
Like giant on a moving hill.
The ghastly bull's-head scowled on high,
Emblem of death to foeman's eye;
And bloody hearts on streamers pale,
Waved wildly in the midnight gale.

O, haste thee, Douglas! haste and ride;
Thy kinsmen's corpses stem the tide!
What red, what dauntless youth is he,
Who stands in Cample to the knee;
Whose arm of steel, and weapon good,
Still dyes the stream with Southern blood,
While round him fall his faithful men!
'Tis Morison of Locherben.

O, haste thee, Douglas, to the fray,
Ere won be that important way!
The Southron's countless prey, within
The dreadful coils of Crighup linn,
No passage from the moor can find,—
The wood below, the gulf behind:
One pass there is, and one alone,
And in that pass stands Morison.
Who crosses there, or man or beast,
Must make their passage o'er his breast,
And over heaps of mangled dead,
That dam red Cample from its bed.
His sister's cries his soul alarm,
And add new vigour to his arm.
His twenty men are waned to ten—
O, haste to dauntless Locherben!

The Southrons baulked, impatient turn,
And crowd once more the fatal bourn.
All desperate grew the work of death,
No yielding but with yielding breath;
Even still lay every death-struck man,
For footing to the furious van.
The little band was seized with dread,
Behind their rampart of the dead;
Power from their arms began to fly,
And hope within their breasts to die,
When loud they heard the cheering word
Of—"Douglas! Douglas!" cross the ford;
Then turned the Southron swift as wind,
For fierce the battle raged behind.

O, stay, brave Morison! O, stay!
Guard but that pass till break of day;
Thy flocks, thy sister to retrieve,
That task to doughty Douglas leave;
Let not thine ardour all betray—
Thy might is spent—brave warrior, stay.

O, for the lyre of heaven that rung
When Linden's lofty hymn was sung;
Or his, who from the height beheld
The reeling strife of Flodden field!
Then far on wing of genius borne
Should ring the wonders of that morn:
Morn!—ah! how many a warrior bold
That morn was never to behold!
When rival rank to rank drew nigh,
When eye was fixed on foeman's eye,
When lowered was lance, and bent was bow,
And falchion clenched to strike the blow,
No breath was heard, nor clank of mail,
Each face with rage grew deadly pale:
Trembled the moon's reluctant ray:
The breeze of heaven sunk soft away.

So furious was that onset's shock,
Destruction's gates at once unlock;
'Twas like the earthquake's hollow groan,
When towers and towns are overthrown:
'Twas like the river's midnight crush,
When snows dissolve, and torrents rush;
When fields of ice, in rude array,
Obstruct its own resistless way:
'Twas like the whirlwind's rending sweep;
'Twas like the tempest of the deep,
Where Corrybraken's surges driven,
Meet, mount, and lash the breast of heaven.

'Twas foot to foot, and brand to brand;
Oft hilt to hilt, and hand to hand;
Oft gallant foemen, woe to tell,
Dead in each other's bosoms fell!
The horsemen met with might and main,
Then reeled, and wheeled, and met again.
A thousand spears on hauberks bang;
A thousand swords on helmets clang.
Where might was with the feebler blent,
Still there the line of battle bent;
As oft recoiled from flank assail,
While blows fell thick as rattling hail.
Nature stood mute that fateful hour,
All save the ranks on Cample-moor,
And mountain goats that left their den,
And bleating fled to Garroch glen.

Dumlanrig, aye in battle keen,
The foremost in the broil was seen:
Woe to the warrior dared withstand
The progress of his deadly brand!
He sat so firm, he reined so well,
Whole ranks before his charger fell.
A valiant youth kept by his side,
With crest and armour crimson dyed;
Charged still with him the yielding foe,
And seconded his every blow.
The Douglas wondered whence he came,
And asked his lineage and his name:
'Twas he who kept the narrow way,
Who raised at first the battle-fray,
And roused Dumlanrig and his men,—
Brave Morison of Locherben.

"My chief," he said, "forgive my fear
For one than life to me more dear;

But late I heard my sister cry,
'Dumlanrig, now thy weapon ply.'—
Her guard waits in yon hollow lea,
Beneath the shade of spreading tree."—

Dumlanrig's eye with ardour shone;
"Follow!" he cried, and spurred him on.
A close gazoon the horsemen made,
Douglas and Morison the head,
And through the ranks impetuous bore,
By dint of lance and broad claymore,
'Mid shouts, and groans of parting life,
For hard and doubtful was the strife.
Behind the knight firm belted on,
They found the fair May Morison.
But why through all Dumlanrig's train,
Search her bright eyes, and search in vain?
A stranger mounts her on his steed;
Brave Morison, where art thou fled?
The drivers for their booty feared,
And soon as Cample-ford was cleared,
To work they fell, and forced away
Across the stream their mighty prey.
The bleating flocks in terror ran
Across the bloody breast of man;
Even the dull cattle gazed with dread,
And lowing, foundered o'er the dead.

The Southrons still the fight maintain;
Though broke, they closed and fought again,
Till shouting drivers gave the word,
That all the flocks had cleared the ford;
Then to that pass the bands retire,
And safely braved Dumlanrig's ire.
Rashly he tried, and tried in vain,
That steep, that fatal path to gain;
Madly prolonged th' unequal fray,
And lost his men, and lost the day.
Amid the battle's fiercest shock,
Three spears were on his bosom broke;
Then, forced in flight to seek remede,
Had it not been his noble steed,
That swift away his master bore,
He ne'er had seen Dumlanrig more.

The day-beam from his moonlight sleep,
O'er Queensberry began to peep;
Kneeled drowsy on the mountain fern,
At length rose tiptoe on the cairn,
Embracing in his bosom pale,
The stars, the moon, and shadowy dale.
Then what a scene appalled the view,
On Cample-moor, as dawning grew!
Along the purple heather spread,
Lay mixed the dying and the dead;
Stern foemen there from quarrel cease,
Who ne'er before had met in peace.
Two kinsmen good the Douglas lost,
And full three hundred of his host;
With one by him lamented most,
The flower of all the Nithsdale men,
Young Morison of Locherben.

The Southrons did no foot pursue,
Nor seek the conflict to renew.
They knew not at the rising sun
What mischief they'd to Douglas done,
But to the south pursued their way,
Glad to escape with such a prey.

Brave Douglas, where thy pride of weir!
How stinted in thy bold career!
Woe, that the Lowther eagle's look
Should shrink before the Lowland rook!
Woe, that the lordly lion's paw
Of ravening wolves should sink in awe!
But doubly woe, the purple heart
Should tarnished from the field depart!

Was it the loss of kinsmen dear,
Or crusted scratch of Southron spear?
Was it thy dumb, thy sullen host;
Thy glory by misconduct lost;
Or thy proud bosom, swelling high,
Made the round tear roll in thine eye?
Ah! no; thy heart was doomed to prove
The sharper pang of slighted love.

What vision lingers on the heath,
Flitting across the field of death;
Its gliding motion, smooth and still
As vapour on the twilight hill,
Or the last ray of falling even
Shed through the parting clouds of heaven?

Is it a sprite that roams forlorn?
Or angel from the bowers of morn,
Come down a tear of heaven to shed,
In pity o'er the valiant dead?
No vain, no fleeting phantom this!
No vision from the bowers of bliss!
Its radiant eye, and stately tread,
Bespeak some beauteous mountain maid:
No rose of Eden's bosom meek,
Could match that maiden's moistened cheek;
No drifted wreath of morning snow,
The whiteness of her lofty brow;
Nor gem of India's purest dye,
The lustre of her eagle eye.

When beauty, Eden's bowers within,
First stretched the arm to deeds of sin;
When passion burned, and prudence slept,
The pitying angels bent and wept.
But tears more soft were never shed,
No, not when angels bowed the head;
A sigh more mild did never breathe
O'er human nature whelmed in death;
Nor woe and dignity combine,
In face so lovely, so benign,
As Douglas saw that dismal hour,
Bent o'er a corse on Cample-moor:
A lady o'er her shield, her trust,
A brave, an only brother's dust!

What heart of man unmoved can lie,
When plays the smile in beauty's eye?
Or when a form of grace and love
To music's notes can lightly move?
Yes: there are hearts unmoved can see
The smile, the ring, the revelry;
But heart of warrior ne'er could bear
The beam of beauty's crystal tear.
Well was that morn the maxim proved—
The Douglas saw, the Douglas loved.

"O, cease thy tears, my lovely May,
Sweet flowret of the banks of Ae,
His soul thou never canst recall—
He fell as warrior wont to fall.
Deep, deep the loss we both bewail;
But that deep loss to countervail,
Far as the day-flight of the hern,
From Locherben to green Glencairn,
From where the Shinnel torrents pour
To the lone vales of Crawford-moor,
The fairy links of Tweed and Lyne,
All, all the Douglas has is thine,
And Douglas too: whate'er betide,
Straight thou shalt be Dumlanrig's bride."—

"What! mighty chief, a bride to thee!
No; by yon heaven's high Majesty,
Sooner I'll beg, forlorn and poor,
Bent at thy meanest vassal's door,
Than look thy splendid halls within,
Thou deer, wrapt in a lion's skin!

"Here lies thy bravest knight in death;
Thy kinsmen strew the purple heath;
What boot thy boasted mountains green?
Nor flock, nor herd, can there be seen;
All driven before thy vaunting foe
To ruthless slaughter, bleat and low,
Whilst thou—shame on thy dastard head!
A wooing com'st amid the dead.

"O, that this feeble maiden hand
Could bend the bow, or wield the brand!
If yeoman mustered in my hall,
Or trooped obsequious at my call,
My country's honour I'd restore,
And shame thy face for evermore.
Go first thy flocks and herds regain;
Revenge thy friends in battle slain;
Thy wounded honour heal; that done,
Douglas may ask May Morison."

Dumlanrig's blood to's bosom rushed,
His manly cheek like crimson blushed.
He called three yeomen to his side:
"Haste, gallant warriors, haste and ride!
Warn Lindsay on the banks of Daur,
The fierce M'Turk and Lochinvaur:
Tell them that Lennox flies amain;
That Maxwell and Glencairn are ta'en;
Kilpatrick with the spoiler rides;
The Johnston flies, and Jardine hides;
That I alone am left to fight
For country's cause and sovereign's right.
My friends are fallen—my warriors toiled—
My towns are burnt—my vassals spoiled:
Yet say—before to-morrow's sun
With amber tips the mountain dun,
Either that host of ruthless thieves
I'll scatter like the forest leaves,
Or my wrung heart shall cease to play,
And my right hand the sword to sway.
At Blackwood I'll their coming bide:
Haste, gallant warriors, haste and ride!"—

He spoke:—each yeoman bent his eye,
And forward stooped in act to fly;
No plea was urged, no short demur;
Each heel was turned to strike the spur.

As ever ye saw the red deer's brood,
From covert sprung, traverse the wood;
Or heath-fowl beat the mountain wind
And leave the fowler fixt behind:
As ever ye saw three arrows spring
At once from yew-bow's twanging string—
So flew the messengers of death,
And, lessening, vanished on the heath.

The Douglas bade his troops with speed
Prepare due honours for the dead,
And meet well armed at evening still
On the green cone of Blackford-hill.
There came M'Turk to aid the war
With troops from Shinnel glens and Scaur;
Fierce Gordon with the clans of Ken,
And Lindsay with his Crawford men;
Old Morton, too, forlorn and gray,
Whose son had fallen at break of day.

If troops on earth may e'er withstand
An onset made by Scottish brand,
Then lawless rapine sways the throng,
And conscience whispers—"This is wrong:"
But should a foe, whate'er his might,
To Scotia's soil dispute her right,
Or dare on native mountain claim
The poorest atom boasts her name,
Though high that warrior's banners soar,
Let him beware the broad claymore.

Scotland! thy honours long have stood,
Though rudely cropt, though rolled in blood,
Yet bathed in warm and purple dew,
More glorious o'er the ruin grew.
Long flourished thy paternal line;
Arabia's lineage stoops to thine.

Dumlanrig found his foes secure,
Stretched on the ridge of Locher-moor:
The hum that wandered from their host,
Far on the midnight breeze was lost.
No deafening drum, no bugle's swell,
No watchword passed from sentinel;

No slight vibration stirred the air
To warn the Scot a foe was there,
Save bleat of flocks that wandered slow,
And oxen's deep and sullen low.

What horrors o'er the warrior hang!
What vultures watch his soul to fang!
What toils! what snares!—he hies him on
Where lightnings flash, and thunders groan;
Where havoc strikes whole legions low,
And death's red billows murmuring flow;
Yet still he fumes and flounders on,
Till crushed the moth—its memory gone!

Why should the bard, who loves to mourn
His maiden's scorn by mountain bourn,
Or pour his wild harp's fairy tone
From sounding cliff or greenwood lone,
Of slaughtered foemen proudly tell,
On deeds of death and horror dwell?

Dread was Dumlanrig's martial ire,
Fierce on the foe he rushed like fire:
Lindsay of Crawford, known to fame,
That night first gained a hero's name:
The brave M'Turk of Stenhouse stood
Bathed to the knees in Southron blood:
A bold and generous chief was he,
And come of ancient pedigree;
And Gordon with his Galloway crew,
O'er floundering ranks resistless flew.
Short was the strife!—they fled as fast
As chaff before the northern blast.

Dumlanrig's flocks were not a few,
And well their worth Dumlanrig knew;
But ne'er so proud was he before
Of his broad bounds and countless store,
As when they strung up Nithsdale plain,
Well guarded to their hills again.
With Douglas' name the greenwoods rung,
As battle-songs his warriors sung.
The banners streamed in double row,
The heart above, the rose below.
His visage glowed, his pulse beat high,
And gladness sparkled in his eye;
For why, he knew the lovely May,
Who in Kilpatrick's castle lay,
With joy his proud return would view,
And her impetuous censure rue.

Well judged he:—Why should haughty chief
Intrude himself on lady's grief,
As if his right—as nought but he
Were worthy her anxiety?
No, warrior: keep thy distance due;
Beauty is proud and jealous too.
If fair and young thy maiden be,
Know she knew that ere told by thee.
Be kind, be gentle, heave the sigh,
And blush before her piercing eye;
For though thou'rt noble, brave, and young,
If rough thy mien and rude thy tongue,
Though proudly towers thy trophied pile,
Hope not for beauty's yielding smile.
Oh! well it suits the brave and high,
Gentle to prove in lady's eye.

Dumlanrig found his lovely flower
Fair as the sunbeam o'er the shower,
Gentle as zephyr of the plain,
Sweet as the rosebud after rain:
Gone all her scorn and maiden pride,
She blushed Dumlanrig's lovely bride.

James of Dumlanrig, though thy name
Scarce vibrates in the ear of fame,
But for thy might and valour keen,
That gallant house had never been.

Blest be thy memory, gallant man!
Oft flashed thy broadsword in the van;
When stern rebellion reared the brand,
And stained the laurels of our land,
No knight unshaken stood like thee
In right of injured majesty:
Even yet, o'er thy forgotten bier,
A minstrel drops the burning tear,
And strikes his wild harp's boldest string,
Thy honours on the breeze to fling,
That mountains once thine own may know
From whom the Queensberry honours flow.

Fair be thy memory, gallant knight!
So true in love, so brave in fight!
Though o'er thy children's princely urn
The sculpture towers, and seraphs mourn,
O'er thy green grave shall wave the yew,
And heaven distil its earliest dew.

When ceased the bard's protracted song,
Circled a smile the fair among;
The song was free, and soft its fall,
So soothing, yet so bold withal,
They loved it well, yet, sooth to say,
Too long, too varied was the lay.

'Twas now the witching time of night.
When reason strays, and forms that fright
Are shadowed on the palsied sight;
When fancy moulds upon the mind
Light visions on the passing wind,
And woos, with faltering tongue and sigh,
The shades o'er memory's wilds that fly;
And much the circle longed to hear
Of gliding ghost, or gifted seer,
That in that still and solemn hour
Might stretch imagination's power,
And restless fancy revel free
In painful, pleasing luxury.
Just as the battle-tale was done
The watchman called the hour of one.

Lucky the hour for him who came,
Lucky the wish of every dame:
The bard who rose at herald's call
Was wont to sing in Highland hall,
Where the wild chieftain of M'Lean
Upheld his dark Hebridian reign;
Where floated crane and clamorous gull
Above the misty shores of Mull;
And evermore the billows rave
Round many a saint and sovereign's grave.
There, round Columba's ruins gray,
The shades of monks are wont to stray,
And slender forms of nuns, that weep
In moonlight by the murmuring deep,
O'er early loves and passions crost,
And being's end for ever lost.
No earthly form their names to save,
No stem to flourish o'er their grave,
No blood of theirs beyond the shrine
To nurse the human soul divine,
Still cherish youth by time unworn,
And flow in ages yet unborn;
While mind, surviving evermore,
Unbodied seeks that lonely shore.

In that wild land our minstrel bred,
From youth a life of song had led,
Wandering each shore and upland dull
With Allan Bawn, the bard of Mull,
To sing the deeds of old Fingal
In every cot and Highland hall.

Well knew he, every ghost that came
To visit fair Hebridian dame,
Was that of monk or abbot gone,
Who once, in cell of pictured stone,
Of woman thought, and her alone.

Well knew he, every female shade,
To westland chief that visit paid
In morning pale, or evening dun,
Was that of fair lamenting nun,
Who once, in cloistered home forlorn,
Languished for joys in youth forsworn;
And oft himself had seen them glide
At dawning from his own bed-side.

Forth stepped he with uncourtly bow;
The heron plume waved o'er his brow;
His garb was blent with varied shade,
And round him flowed his Highland plaid.
But woe to Southland dame and knight
In minstrel's tale who took delight.
Though known the air, the song he sung
Was in the barbarous Highland tongue:
But tartaned chiefs in raptures hear
The strains, the words, to them so dear.

Thus ran the bold portentous lay,
As near as southern tongue can say.

The Abbot M'Kinnon.

THE SEVENTEENTH BARD'S SONG.[1]

M'Kinnon's tall mast salutes the day,
And beckons the breeze in Iona bay;
Plays lightly up in the morning sky,
And nods to the green wave rolling by;
The anchor upheaves, the sails unfurl,
The pennons of silk in the breezes curl;
But not one monk on holy ground
Knows whither the Abbot M'Kinnon is bound.

Well could that bark o'er the ocean glide,
Though monks and friars alone must guide;
For never man of other degree
On board that sacred ship might be.
On deck M'Kinnon walked soft and slow;
The haulers sung from the gilded prow;
The helmsman turned his brow to the sky,
Upraised his cowl and upraised his eye,
And away shot the bark on the wing of the wind,
Over billow and bay like an image of mind.

Aloft on the turret the monks appear,
To see where the bark of their abbot would bear;
They saw her sweep from Iona bay,
And turn her prow to the north away,
Still lessen to view in the hazy screen,
And vanish amid the islands green.
Then they turned their eyes to the female dome,
And thought of the nuns till the abbot came home.

Three times the night with aspect dull
Came stealing o'er the moors of Mull;
Three times the sea-gull left the deep,
To doze on the knob of the dizzy steep,
By the sound of the ocean lulled to sleep;
And still the watch-lights sailors see
On the top of the spire, and the top of Dun-ye;
And the laugh rings through the sacred dome,
For still the abbot is not come home.

But the wolf that nightly swam the sound,
From Rosa's rude impervious bound,
On the ravenous burrowing race to feed,
That loved to haunt the home of the dead,
To him Saint Columb had left in trust
To guard the bones of the royal and just,
Of saints and of kings the sacred dust;
The savage was scared from his charnel of death,
And swam to his home in hunger and wrath,
For he momently saw, through the night so dun,
The cowering monk, and the veiled nun,
Whispering, sighing, and stealing away
By cross dark alley, and portal gray.

[1] To describe the astonishing scenes to which this romantic tale relates, Icolmkill and Staffa, would only be multiplying pages to no purpose. By the Temple of the Ocean is mean the isle of Staffa, and by its chancel the Cave of Fingal.

O, wise was the founder, and well said he,
"Where there are women, mischief must be."[1]

No more the watch-fires gleam to the blast,
M'Kinnon and friends arrive at last.
A stranger youth to the isle they brought,
Modest of mien and deep of thought,
In costly sacred robes bedight,
And he lodged with the abbot by day and by night.

His breast was graceful, and round withal,
His leg was taper, his foot was small,
And his tread so light that it flung no sound
On listening ear or vault around.
His eye was the morning's brightest ray,
And his neck like the swan's in Iona bay;
His teeth the ivory polished new,
And his lip like the morel when glossed with dew,
While under his cowl's embroidered fold
Were seen the curls of waving gold.
This comely youth, of beauty so bright,
Abode with the abbot by day and by night.

When arm in arm they walked the isle,
Young friars would beckon, and monks would smile;
But sires, in dread of sins unshriven,
Would shake their heads and look up to heaven,
Afraid the frown of the saint to see,
Who reared their temple amid the sea,
And pledged his soul to guard the dome,
Till virtue should fly her western home.
But now a stranger of hidden degree,
Too fair, too gentle a man to be—
This stranger of beauty and step so light
Abode with the abbot by day and by night.

The months and the days flew lightly by,
The monks were kind and the nuns were shy;
But the gray-haired sires, in trembling mood,
Kneeled at the altar and kissed the rood.

M'Kinnon he dreamed that the saint of the isle
Stood by his side, and with courteous smile,
Bade him arise from his guilty sleep,
And pay his respects to the God of the deep,
In temple that north in the main appeared,
Which fire from bowels of ocean had seared,
Which the giant builders of heaven had reared,
To rival in grandeur the stately pile
Himself had upreared in Iona's isle;
For round them rose the mountains of sand,
The fishes had left the coasts of the land,
And so high ran the waves of the angry sea,
They had drizzled the cross on the top of Dun-ye.
The cycle was closed and the period run
He had vowed to the sea, he had vowed to the sun,
If in that time rose trouble or pain,
Their homage to pay to the God of the main.

Then he bade him haste and the rites prepare,
Named all the monks should with him fare,
And promised again to see him there.

M'Kinnon awoke from his visioned sleep,
He opened his casement and looked on the deep;
He looked to the mountains, he looked to the shore,
The vision amazed him and troubled him sore,
He never had heard of the rite before;
But all was so plain, he thought meet to obey,
He durst not decline, and he would not delay.

Uprose the abbot, uprose the morn,
Uprose the sun from the Bens of Lorn;
And the bark her course to the northward framed,
With all on board whom the saint had named.

The clouds were journeying east the sky,
The wind was low and the swell was high,
And the glossy sea was heaving bright
Like ridges and hills of liquid light;
While far on her lubrick bosom were seen
The magic dyes of purple and green.

How joyed the bark her sides to lave!
She leaned to the lee and she girdled the wave;
Aloft on the stayless verge she hung,
Light on the steep wave veered and swung,
And the crests of the billows before her flung.
Loud murmured the ocean with downward growl,
The seal swam aloof and the dark sea fowl;
The pie-duck sought the depth of the main,
And rose in the wheel of her wake again;
And behind her far to the southward, shone
A pathway of snow on the waste alone.

But now the dreadful strand they gain,
Where rose the sacred dome of the main;
Oft had they seen the place before,
And kept aloof from the dismal shore,
But now it rose before their prow,
And what they beheld they did not know.
The tall gray forms, in close-set file,
Upholding the roof of that holy pile;
The sheets of foam and the clouds of spray,
And the groans that rushed from the portals gray,
Appalled their hearts, and drove them away.

They wheeled their bark to the east around
And moored in basin, by rocks imbound;
Then, awed to silence, they trode the strand
Where furnaced pillars in order stand,
All framed of the liquid burning levin,
And bent like the bow that spans the heaven,
Or upright ranged in horrid array,
With purfle of green o'er the darksome gray.

Their path was on wondrous pavement of old,
Its blocks all cast in some giant mould,

[1] St. Columba placed the nuns in an island at a little distance from Iona, where he would not suffer either a cow or a woman; "for where there are cows," said he, "there must be women; and where there are women, there must be mischief."

Fair hewn and grooved by no mortal hand,
With countermure guarded by sea and by land.
The watcher Bushella frowned over their way,
Enrobed in the sea-baize, and hooded with gray;
The warder that stands by that dome of the deep,
With spray-shower and rainbow, the entrance to keep.
But when they drew nigh to the chancel of ocean,
And saw her waves rush to their raving devotion,
Astounded and awed to the antes they clung,
And listened the hymns in her temple she sung.
The song of the cliff, when the winter winds blow,
The thunder of heaven, the earthquake below,
Conjoined, like the voice of a maiden would be,
Compared with the anthem there sung by the sea.

The solemn rows in that darksome den,
Were dimly seen like the forms of men,
Like giant monks in ages agone,
Whom the God of the ocean had scared to stone,
And bound in his temple for ever to lean,
In sackcloth of gray and visors of green,
An everlasting worship to keep,
And the big salt tears eternally weep.

So rapid the motion, the whirl and the boil,
So loud was the tumult, so fierce the turmoil,
Appalled from those portals of terror they turn,
On pillar of marble their incense to burn.
Around the holy flame they pray,
Then turning their faces all west away,
On angel pavement each bent his knee,
And sung this hymn to the God of the sea.

The Monk's Hymn.

Thou, who makest the ocean to flow,
Thou, who walkest the channels below;
To thee, to thee, this incense we heap,
Thou, who knowest not slumber nor sleep,
Great Spirit that movest on the face of the deep!
To thee, to thee, we sing to thee,
God of the western wind, God of the sea!

To thee, who bringest with thy right hand
The little fishes around our land;
To thee, who breath'st in the bosomed sail,
Rulest the shark and the rolling whale,
Flingest the sinner to downward grave,
Lightest the gleam on the mane of the wave,
Bid'st the billows thy reign deform,
Laugh'st in the whirlwind, sing'st in the storm;
Or risest like mountain amid the sea,
Where mountain was never, and never will be,
And rearest thy proud and thy pale chaperoon
'Mid walks of the angels and ways of the moon;
To thee, to thee, this wine we pour,
God of the western wind, God of the shower!

To thee, who bid'st those mountains of brine
Softly sink in the fair moonshine,
And spread'st thy couch of silver light,
To lure to thy bosom the queen of the night;
Who weavest the cloud of the ocean dew,
And the mist that sleeps on her breast so blue;
When the murmurs die at the base of the hill,
And the shadows lie rocked and slumbering still.
And the solan's young, and the lines of foam,
Are scarcely heaved on thy peaceful home,
We pour this oil and this wine to thee,
God of the western wind, God of the sea!—
"Greater yet must the offering be."

The monks gazed round, the abbot grew wan,
For the closing notes were not sung by man.
They came from the rock, or they came from the air,
From voice they knew not, and knew not where:
But it sung with a mournful melody,
"Greater yet must the offering be."

In holy dread they past away,
And they walked the ridge of that isle so gray,
And saw the white waves toil and fret,
An hundred fathoms below their feet;
They looked to the countless isles that lie
From Barra to Mull, and from Jura to Skye;
They looked to heaven, they looked to the main,
They looked at all with a silent pain,
As on places they were not to see again.

A little bay lies hid from sight,
O'erhung by cliffs of dreadful height;
When they drew nigh that airy steep,
They heard a voice rise from the deep,
And that voice was sweet as voice could be,
And they feared it came from the Maid of the Sea.

M'Kinnon lay stretched on the verge of the hill,
And peeped from the height on the bay so still;
And he saw her sit on a weedy stone,
Laving her fair breast, and singing alone;
And aye she sank the wave within,
Till it gurgled around her lovely chin,
Then combed her locks of the pale sea-green,
And aye this song was heard between.

The Mermaid's Song.

Matilda of Skye
Alone may lie,
And list to the wind that whistles by:
Sad may she be,
For deep in the sea,
Deep, deep, deep in the sea,
This night her lover shall sleep with me.
She may turn and hide
From the spirits that glide,
And the ghost that stands at her bedside:
But never a kiss the vow shall seal,
Nor warm embrace her bosom feel;
For far, far down in the floors below,
Moist as this rock-weed, cold as the snow,
With the eel, and the clam, and the pearl of the deep,
On soft sea-flowers her lover shall sleep;

And long and sound shall his slumber be,
In the coral bowers of the deep with me.

The trembling sun, far, far away,
Shall pour on his couch a softened ray,
And his mantle shall wave in the flowing tide,
And the little fishes shall turn aside;
But the waves and the tides of the sea shall cease,
Ere wakes her love from his bed of peace.
No home!—no kiss!—No, never! never!
His couch is spread for ever and ever.

The abbot arose in dumb dismay,
They turned and fled from the height away,
For dark and portentous was the day.
When they came in view of their rocking sail,
They saw an old man who sat on the wale;[1]
His beard was long, and silver gray,
Like the rime that falls at the break of day;
His locks like wool, and his colour wan,
And he scarcely looked like an earthly man.

They asked his errand, they asked his name,
Whereunto bound, and whence he came;
But a sullen thoughtful silence he kept,
And turned his face to the sea and wept.
Some gave him welcome, and some gave him scorn,
But the abbot stood pale, with terror o'erborne;
He tried to be jocund, but trembled the more,
For he thought he had seen the face before.

Away went the ship with her canvas all spread.
So glad to escape from that island of dread;
And skimmed the blue wave like a streamer of light,
Till fell the dim veil 'twixt the day and the night.

Then the old man arose and stood up on the prow,
And fixed his dim eyes on the ocean below;
And they heard him saying, "Oh, woe is me!
But great as the sin must the sacrifice be."
Oh, mild was his eye, and his manner sublime,
When he looked unto heaven, and said—"Now is the time."
He looked to the weather, he looked to the lee,
He looked as for something he dreaded to see,
Then stretched his pale hand, and pointed his eye
To a gleam on the verge of the eastern sky.

The monks soon beheld, on the lofty Ben[2]-More,
A sight which they never had seen before,
A belt of blue lightning around it was driven,
And its crown was encircled by morion of heaven;
And they heard a herald that loud did cry,
"Prepare the way for the abbot of I!"

Then a sound arose, they knew not where,
It came from the sea, or it came from the air,
'Twas louder than tempest that ever blew,
And the sea-fowls screamed, and in terror flew;
Some ran to the cords, some kneeled at the shrine,
But all the wild elements seemed to combine;
'Twas just but one moment of stir and commotion,
And down went the ship like a bird of the ocean!

This moment she sailed all stately and fair,
The next, nor ship nor shadow was there,
But a boil that arose from the deep below;
A mountain gurgling column of snow:
It sunk away with a murmuring moan—
The sea is calm, and the sinners are gone.

CONCLUSION.

Friend of the bard! peace to thy heart,
Long hast thou acted generous part—
Long hast thou courteously in pain
Attended to a feeble strain,
While oft abashed has sunk thine eye—
Thy task is done, the Wake is by.

I saw thy fear, I knew it just;
'Twas not for minstrels long in dust,
But for the fond and venturous swain
Who dared to wake their notes again;
Yet oft thine eye has spoke delight,
I marked it well, and blessed the sight:
No sour disdain, nor manner cold,
Noted contempt for tales of old;
Oft hast thou at the fancies smiled,
And marvelled at the legends wild;
Thy task is o'er; peace to thy heart!
For thou hast acted generous part.

'Tis said that thirty bards appeared,
That thirty names were registered,
With whom were titled chiefs combined,
But some are lost and some declined.
Woe's me, that all my mountain lore
Has been unfit to rescue more!
And that my guideless rustic skill
Has told those ancient tales so ill.

The prize harp still hung on the wall;
The bards were warned to leave the hall,
Till courtiers gave the judgment true,
To whom the splendid prize was due.
What curious wight will pass with me,
The anxious motley group to see;
List their remarks of right and wrong,
Of skilful hand and faulty song,
And drink one glass the bards among?

There sit the men—behold them there,
Made maidens quake and courtiers stare,

[1] *Wale* is a Hebridean term, and signifies the verge or brim of the mountain. It is supposed to be modern, and used only in those maritime districts, as having a reference to the gunnel or wale of a ship or boat.

[2] *Ben* is a Highland term, and denotes a mountain of a pyramidal form, which stands unconnected with others.

Whose names shall future ages tell;
What do they seem? behold them well.
A simpler race you shall not see,
Awkward and vain as men can be;
Light as the fumes of fervid wine,
Or foam-bells floating on the brine,
The gossamers in air that sail,
Or down that dances in the gale.

Each spoke of other's fame and skill
With high applause, but jealous will.
Each song, each strain, he erst had known,
And all had faults except his own.
Plaudits were mixed with meaning jeers,
For all had hopes, and all had fears.

A herald rose the court among,
And named each bard and named his song;
Rizzio was named from royal chair—
"Rizzio!" re-echoed many a fair.
Each song had some that song approved,
And voices gave for bard beloved.
The first division called and done,
Gardyn stood highest just by one.
No merits can the courtier sway,
'Twas then, it seems, as at this day.

Queen Mary reddened, wroth was she
Her favourite thus outdone to see,
Reproved her squire in high disdain,
And caused him call the votes again.
Strange though it seem, the truth I say,
Feature of that unyielding day,
Her favourite's voters counted o'er,
Were found much fewer than before.
Glistened her eyes with pungent dew;
She found with whom she had to do.

Again the royal gallery rung
With names of those who second sung,
When, spite of haughty Highland blood,
The Bard of Ettrick upmost stood.

The rest were named who sung so late,
And, after long and keen debate,
The specious nobles of the south
Carried the nameless stranger youth;
Though Highland wrath was at the full,
Contending for the Bard of Mull.

Then did the worst dispute begin,
Which of the *three* the prize should win.
'Twas party all—not minstrel worth,
But honour of the south and north;
And nought was heard throughout the court,
But taunt, and sneer, and keen retort.
High ran the words, and fierce the fume,
And from beneath each nodding plume
Red look was cast that vengeance said,
And palm on broadsword's hilt was laid;
While Lowland jeer, and Highland mood,
Threatened to end the Wake in blood.

Rose from his seat the Lord of Mar,
Serene in counsel as in war.
"For shame," said he, "contendants all!
This outrage done in royal hall
Is to our country foul disgrace:
What! mock our Sovereign to her face!
Whose generous heart, and taste refined,
Alike to bard and courtier kind,
This high repast for all designed.
For shame! your party strife suspend,
And list the counsel of a friend.

"Unmeet it is for you or me
To lessen one of all the three,
Each excellent in his degree;
But taste, as sapient sages tell,
Varies with climes in which we dwell.

"Fair emblem of the Border dale,[1]
Is cadence soft, and simple tale;
While stern romantic Highland clime,
Still nourishes the rude sublime.

"If Border ear may taste the worth
Of the wild pathos of the north:
Or that sublimed by Ossian's lay,
By forest dark and mountain gray,
By clouds which frowning cliffs deform,
By roaring flood and raving storm,
Enjoy the smooth, the fairy tale,
Or evening song of Teviotdale;
Then trow you may the tides adjourn,
And nature from her path-way turn;
The wild-duck drive to mountain tree,
The capperkayle to swim the sea,
The heath-cock to the shelvy shore,
The partridge to the mountain hoar,
And bring the red-eyed ptarmigan
To dwell by the abodes of man.

"To end this strife, unruled and vain,
Let all the three be called again;
Their skill alternately be tried,
And let the Queen alone decide.
Then hushed be jeer and answer proud,"—
He said, and all, consenting, bowed.

When word was brought to bards' retreat,
The group were all in dire debate;
The Border youth (that stranger wight)
Had quarrelled with the clans outright;
Had placed their merits out of ken,
Deriding both the songs and men.
'Tis said—but few the charge believes—
He branded them as fools and thieves.
Certes that war and woe had been,
For gleaming dirks unsheathed were seen;
The Highland minstrels ill could brook
His taunting word and haughty look.

[1] *Dale* is the course of a Lowland river, with its adjacent hills and valleys. It conveys the same meaning as *strath* does in the Highlands.

The youth was chafed, and with disdain
Refused to touch his harp again;
Said he desired no more renown
Than keep those Highland boasters down;
Now he had seen them quite outdone,
The south had two, the north but one;
But should they bear the prize away,
For that he should not, would not play;
He cared for no such guerdon mean,
Nor for the harp, nor for the Queen.

His claim withdrawn, the victors twain
Repaired to prove their skill again.

The song that tuneful Gardyn sung
Is still admired by old and young,
And long shall be at evening fold,
While songs are sung or tales are told.
Of stolen delights began the song,
Of love the Carron woods among;
Of lady borne from Carron side
To Barnard towers and halls of pride;
Of jealous lord and doubtful bride;
And ended with Gilmorice' doom
Cut off in manhood's early bloom.
Soft rung the closing notes and slow,
And every heart was steeped in woe.

The harp of Ettrick rung again;[1]
Her bard intent on fairy strain,
And fairy freak by moonlight shaw,
Sung young Tam Linn of Carterha'.

Queen Mary's harp on high that hung,
And every tone responsive rung,
With gems of gold that dazzling shone,
That harp is to the Highlands gone;
Gardyn is crowned with garlands gay,
And bears the envied prize away.[2]
Long, long that harp, the hills among,
Resounded Ossian's warrior song;
Waked slumbering lyres from every tree
Adown the banks of Don and Dee;
At length was borne by beauteous bride,
To woo the airs on Garry side.

When full two hundred years had fled,
And all the northern bards were dead,
That costly harp, of wondrous mould,
Defaced of all its gems and gold,
With that which Gardyn erst did play,
Back to Dunedin found its way.

As Mary's hand the victor crowned,
And twined the wreath his temples round,
Loud were the shouts of Highland chief—
The Lowlanders were dumb with grief;
And the poor Bard of Ettrick stood
Like statue pale, in moveless mood;
Like ghost, which oft his eyes had seen
At gloaming in his glens so green.
Queen Mary saw the minstrel's pain,
And bade from bootless grief refrain.

She said a boon to him should fall
Worth all the harps in royal hall;
Of Scottish song a countless store,
Precious remains of minstrel lore,
And cottage, by a silver rill,
Should all reward his rustic skill:
Did other gift his bosom claim,
He needed but that gift to name.

"O, my fair Queen," the minstrel said,
With faltering voice and hanging head,
"Your cottage keep, and minstrel lore—
Grant me a harp, I ask no more.
From thy own hand a lyre I crave;
That boon alone my heart can save."

"Well hast thou asked: and be it known,
I have a harp of old renown,
Hath many an ardent wight beguiled;
'Twas framed by wizard of the wild,
And will not yield one measure bland
Beneath a skilless stranger hand;
But once her powers by progress found,
O, there is magic in the sound!

"When worldly woes oppress thy heart—
And thou and all must share a part—
Should scorn be cast from maiden's eye,
Should friendship fail, or fortune fly;
Steal with thy harp to lonely brake,
Her wild, her soothing numbers wake,
And soon corroding cares shall cease,
And passion's host be lulled to peace;
Angels a gilded screen shall cast,
That cheers the future, veils the past.

[1] That some notable bard flourished in Ettrick Forest in that age is evident, from the numerous ballads and songs which relate to places in that country, and incidents that happened there. Many of these are of a very superior cast. "Outlaw Murray," "Young Tam Lean of Carterhaugh," "Jamie Telfer i' the fair Dodhead," "The Dowy Downs of Yarrow," and many others, are of the number. Dunbar, in his "Lament for the Bards," merely mentions him by the title of *Ettrick*: more of him we know not.

[2] Queen Mary's harp, of most curious workmanship, was found in the house of Lude, on the banks of the Garry in Athol, as was the old Caledonian harp. They were both brought to that house by a bride, whom the chieftain of Lude married from the family of Gardyn of Banchory (now Garden of Troup). It was defaced of all its ornaments, and Queen Mary's portrait, set in gold and jewels, during the time of the last rebellion. How it came into the possession of that family is not known; at least, traditions vary considerably regarding the incident. But there is every reason to suppose, that it was given in consequence of some musical excellency in one or other of the Gardyns; for it may scarcely be deemed, that the royal donor would confer so rich and so curious an instrument on one who could make no use of it. So far does the tale correspond with truth, and there is, besides, a farther coincidence, of which I was not previously aware. I find, that Queen Mary actually gave a grand treat at Holyrood-house at the very time specified in the poem, where great proficiency was displayed both in music and dancing.

"That harp will make the elves of eve
Their dwelling in the moonbeam leave,
And ope thine eyes by haunted tree
Their glittering tiny forms to see.
The flitting shades that woo the glen
'Twill shape to forms of living men,—
To forms on earth no more you see,
Who once were loved, and aye will be;
And holiest converse you may prove
Of things below and things above."

"That is, that is the harp for me!"
Said the rapt bard in ecstasy;
"This soothing, this exhaustless store.
Grant me, my Queen—I ask no more."

O, when the weeping minstrel laid
The relic in his old gray plaid,
When Holyrood he left behind
To gain his hills of mist and wind,
Never was hero of renown,
Or monarch prouder of his crown.
He tript the vale, he climbed the coomb,[1]
The mountain breeze began to boom;
Aye when the magic chords it rung,
He raised his voice and blithely sung;
"Hush, my wild harp! thy notes forbear;
No blooming maids nor elves are here:
Forbear a while that witching tone,
Thou must not, canst not sing alone.
When summer flings her watchet screen
At eve o'er Ettrick woods so green,
Thy notes shall many a heart beguile;
Young Beauty's eye shall o'er thee smile,
And fairies trip it merrily
Around my royal harp and me."

Long has that harp of magic tone
To all the minstrel world been known:
Who has not heard her witching lays
Of Ettrick banks and Yarrow braes?
But that sweet bard, who sung and played
Of many a feat and Border raid,
Of many a knight and lovely maid,
When forced to leave his harp behind
Did all her tuneful chords unwind;
And many ages passed and came
Ere man so well could tune the same.

Bangour the daring task essayed,
Not half the chords his fingers played;
Yet even then some thrilling lays
Bespoke the harp of ancient days.

Redoubted Ramsay's peasant skill
Flung some strained notes along the hill;
His was some lyre from lady's hall,
And not the mountain harp at all.

Langhorn arrived from Southern dale,
And chimed his notes on Yarrow vale;
They would not, could not, touch the heart;
His was the modish lyre of art.

Sweet rung the harp to Logan's hand:
Then Leyden came from Border land,
With dauntless heart and ardour high,
And wild impatience in his eye.
Though false his tones at times might be,
Though wild notes marred the symphony
Between, the glowing measure stole
That spoke the bard's inspired soul.
Sad were those strains, when hymned afar,
On the green vales of Malabar:
O'er seas beneath the golden morn,
They travelled on the monsoon borne,
Thrilling the heart of Indian maid,
Beneath the wild banana's shade.—
Leyden! a shepherd wails thy fate,
And Scotland knows her loss too late.

The day arrived—blest be the day,
Walter the Abbot came that way!—
The sacred relic met his view—
Ah! well the pledge of Heaven he knew!
He screwed the chords, he tried a strain;
'Twas wild—he tuned and tried again,
Then poured the numbers bold and free,
The ancient magic melody.

The land was charmed to list his lays;
It knew the harp of ancient days.
The Border chiefs, that long had been
In sepulchres unhearsed and green,
Passed from their mouldy vaults away,
In armour red and stern array,
And by their moonlight halls were seen,
In visor helm, and habergeon.
Even fairies sought our land again,
So powerful was the magic strain.

Blest be his generous heart for aye!
He told me where the relic lay;
Pointed my way with ready will,
Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill;
Watched my first notes with curious eye,
And wondered at my minstrelsy:
He little weened a parent's tongue
Such strains had o'er my cradle sung.

O could the bard I loved so long,
Reprove my fond aspiring song?
Or could his tongue of candour say,
That I should throw my harp away?
Just when her notes began with skill
To sound beneath the southern hill,
And twine around my bosom's core,
How could we part for evermore?
'Twas kindness all,—I cannot blame,—
For bootless is the minstrel flame;
But sure a bard might well have known
Another's feelings by his own!

[1] *Coomb* is a Scots Lowland term, and used to distinguish all such hills as are scooped out on one side in form of a crescent. The bosom of the hill, or that portion which lies within the lunated verge, is always denominated the *coomb*.

Of change enamoured, woe the while!
He left our mountains, left the isle;
And far to other kingdoms bore
The Caledonian harp of yore;
But, to the hand that framed her true,
Only by force one strain she threw.
That harp he never more shall see,
Unless 'mong Scotland's hills with me.

Now, my loved harp, a while farewell!
I leave thee on the old gray thorn;
The evening dews will mar thy swell,
That waked to joy the cheerful morn.

Farewell, sweet soother of my woe!
Chill blows the blast around my head;
And louder yet that blast may blow,
When down this weary vale I've sped.

The wreath lies on Saint Mary's shore;
The mountain sounds are harsh and loud;
The lofty brows of stern Clokmore
Are visored with the moving cloud.

But winter's deadly hues shall fade
On moorland bald and mountain shaw,[1]
And soon the rainbow's lovely shade
Sleep on the breast of Bowerhope Law;[2]

Then will the glowing suns of Spring,
The genial shower and stealing dew,
Wake every forest bird to sing,
And every mountain flower renew.

But not the rainbow's ample ring,
That spans the glen[3] and mountain gray,
Though fanned by western breeze's wing,
And sunned by summer's glowing ray,

To man decayed, can evermore
Renew the age of love and glee!
Can ever second spring restore
To my old mountain harp and me?

But when the hue of softened green
Spreads over hill and lonely lea,
And lowly primrose opes unseen
Her virgin bosom to the bee;

When hawthorns breathe their odours far,
And carols hail the year's return;
And daisy spreads her silver star
Unheeded by the mountain burn;

Then will I seek the aged thorn,
The haunted wild and fairy ring,
Where oft thy erring numbers borne
Have taught the wandering winds to sing.

[1] *Shaw* is a Lowland term, and denotes the snout or brow of a hill; but the part so denominated is always understood to be of a particular form, broad at the base, and contracted to a point above. Each of these terms conveys to the mind a strong picture of the place so designed. Both are very common.

[2] *Law* signifies a detached hill of any description, but more generally such as are of a round or conical form. It seems to bear the same acceptation in the Lowlands of Scotland, as *Ben* does in the Highlands. The term is supposed to have had its derivation from the circumstances of the ancient inhabitants of the country distributing the *law* on the tops of such hills; and where no one of that form was nigh, artificial mounds were raised in the neighbourhood of towns for that purpose. Hence they were originally called *Law-hills*; but, by a natural and easy contraction, the *laws* and the *hills* of the country came to signify the same thing. A little affinity may still be traced:—both were effective in impeding the progress of a hostile invader; while the hardy native surmounted both without difficulty and without concern.

[3] *Glen* is a term common to every part of Scotland alike, and invariably denotes the whole course of a mountain stream, with all the hills and valleys on each side to the first summit. It is an indefinite term, and describes no particular size, or local appearance of a river, or the scenery contiguous to it, farther than that it is one, and inclined to be narrow and confined between the hills: these glens being from one to thirty miles in length, and proportionably dissimilar in other respects. By a *glen*, however, is generally to be understood a branch of a greater river. The course of the great river is denominated the *strath*, as Strath-Tay, Strath-Spey, &c.; and the lesser rivers, which communicate with these, are the *glens*. There may be a few exceptions from this general rule, but they are of no avail as affecting the acceptation of the term whenever it is used as descriptive.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO THE QUEEN'S WAKE.

Strone—(only once used).—*A strone* is that hill which terminates the range. It is a Highland term, but common in the middle districts of Scotland.

Cory, or *Correi*, is a northern term, and is invariably descriptive of a green hollow part of the mountain, from which a rivulet descends.

If there is any other term of locality peculiar to Scotland in this poem, I am not aware of it. The Songs of the true bards, indeed, who affect to imitate the ancient manner, abound with old Scotch words and terms, which, it is presumed, the rythm, the tenor of the verse, and the narrative will illustrate, though they may not be found in any glossary of that language. These are, indeed, generally so notoriously deficient and absurd, that it is painful for any one conversant in the genuine old provincial dialect to look into them.

Ignorant, however, as I am of every dialect save my mother tongue, I imagine that I understand so much of the English language as to perceive that its muscular strength consists in the energy of its primitive stem—in the trunk from which all its foliage hath sprung, and around which its exuberant tendrils are all entwined and interwoven—I mean the remains of the ancient Teutonic. On the strength of this conceived principle, which may haply be erroneous, I have laid it down as a maxim, that the greater number of these old words and terms that can be introduced with propriety into our language, the better. To this my casual innovations must be attributed. The authority of Grahame and Scott has of late rendered a few of these old terms legitimate. If I had been as much master of the standard language as they, I would have introduced ten times more.

The following poem was inserted by the publisher of the second edition, as illustrative of some of the songs in the work. It was written and sent to him by R. Barton, Esq., Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Shepherd of Ettrick! as of yore
To humble swains the seraph sung;
Again, though now unseen, they pour
Their hallowed strains from mortal tongue.

For, O! celestial are the tones
The minstrel strikes to Malcolm's sorrow;
When Jura, echoing back his moans,
Claims the lost maiden of Glen-Ora.

Soft dies the strain: the chords now ring,
Swept by a more impetuous hand;
Indignant Gardyn strikes the string,
And terror chills the listening band.

Now from the cliffs of old Cairn-Gorm
Dark gathering clouds the tempest bring;
He comes, the Spirit of the Storm!
And at the rustling of his wing,

The harp's wild notes, now high, now low,
In varying cadence swell or fall,
Like wintry winds in wild Glencoe,
Or ruined Bothwell's roofless hall.

A wilder strain is wafted near,
As from the regions of the sky;
And where's the mortal that can hear
Unmoved the Spectre's lullaby?

To weave the due reward of praise
For every rival bard were vain;
Nor suits an humble poet's lays,
Who loves, yet fears a loftier strain.

Yet must I pause upon the tale
Of that strange bark for Staffa bound;
Proudly she greets the morning gale,
Proudly she sails from holy ground.

O, never yet has ship that traced
The pathless bosom of the main,
Been with such magic numbers graced,
Or honoured with so sweet a strain.

But who, that sees the morning rise
Serenely bright, can tell the hour
When the rough tempest of the skies
Shall next display its awful power?

And who, that sees the floating bark
Sail forth obedient to the gale,
Forsees the impending horrors dark
That swell the terror of the tale?

Nor can I pass in silence by
That favoured maiden's wondrous doom,
Who, 'neath a self-illumined sky,
Saw fields and flowers in endless bloom.

O Heaven-taught Shepherd! when or where
Was that ethereal legend wrought?
What urged thee thus a flight to dare
Through realms by former bards unsought?

Say, hast thou, like Kilmeny, been
Transported to the land of thought;
And thence, by minstrel vision keen,
The fire of inspiration caught?

It must be so: in cottage lone,
To dreams of poesy resigned,
From Ettrick's banks thy soul has flown,
And earth-born follies left behind;

Then through those scenes Kilmeny saw,
In trance ecstatic hast thou roved,
And witnessed, but with holy awe,
What mortal fancy never proved.

O Shepherd! since 'tis thine to boast
The fascinating powers of song,
Far, far above the countless host,
Who swell the Muses' suppliant throng;

The Gift of God distrust no more,
His inspiration be thy guide;
Be heard thy harp from shore to shore,
Thy song's reward thy country's pride.

Woodbridge, *April* 21, 1818.

THE MOUNTAIN BARD.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

In his first attempt in authorship, when the Ettrick Shepherd transcribed a few of his early poems while waiting for the sale of his sheep in Edinburgh, he was evidently groping in darkness, and had not as yet discovered where his proper path lay. There was no such uncertainty, however, when his next publication, the "Mountain Bard," was produced: he had found out the secret of his strength, and its proper direction; and the public expectation which was created by its appearance was more than justified by the productions that followed. In looking back upon these two earliest works, we are struck with the signal improvement that had intervened to elevate the one above the other. We feel that the first, a little common-place volume, might have been written by many a shepherd, while the second could have been written by no shepherd but himself. Even the "Mountain Bard" alone, though Hogg had produced nothing else, would have been cherished by the literary world as a choice specimen of what untaught poetical genius could accomplish; and if this, his second work, did not continue to be rated according to its intrinsic merits, it was only because the superior excellence of those that followed had the natural tendency to throw it into the shade.

The form of the "Mountain Bard" indicates the circumstances under which it was composed. It is a collection of miscellaneous ballads, among which none is especially predominant; and they show that they were composed at uncertain intervals, without having any reference the one to the other. It was in this way that the shepherd, before he became an author by profession, was wont to make up a volume: on the spur of the moment, and in a temporary emergency, he collected such poems as he had from time to time composed at his leisure hours for his own especial recreation; and having only a few additions or alterations to make, they were ready for the press at a very short notice. It is from such a process that the present collection, as well as the "Forest Minstrel," by which it was succeeded, evince a spontaneity that has no reference to the ordeal of a public appearance. They had gratified himself and pleased his friends, which was their original destination, while their subsequent appearance in print was an after-thought and a necessity. Thus his course continued, until the renown he had won by the "Queen's Wake" gave him a character worth supporting, and a career he wished to follow, after which, his "Mador of the Moor," "Pilgrims of the Sun," and other productions, were entire poems, the result of continued systematic study, instead of disconnected efforts.

In a work composed under such circumstances, where the author was free to follow his own bent, undeterred by the fear of a critical public, the "Mountain Bard" is a veritable transcript of the singular mind from which it emanated. It is a collection of poetical tales written by an untaught man, who had neither a system to illustrate nor a theory to establish. They are the legends of his own district, handed down through generations of the peasantry from time immemorial, but kindled into life, and clothed with beauty by the magic power of his genius, until they rise from mere village tales, into something of epic importance and grandeur, as well as life-like reality. But the qualities with which they are especially pervaded are those of the mystical and supernatural. From his original disposition, Hogg was a lover of the marvellous, and this tendency, his early life, confined to a single lonely locality, only tended to invigorate and confirm. Shut up within a limited range, and almost wholly secluded from the world of reality, in which he had neither part nor portion, he turned with double ardour to a world of his own; so that, while his temporary hut was in Ettrick Forest, his home was in Fairyland, where he could roam at will, and create according to his own good pleasure. Such was the man and such the poet; one to whom the supernatural was worth a whole universe of common-place realities, and who welcomed fays, phantoms, and wizards, as the most congenial of all associates. In this consisted his poetical life, as well as poetical superiority.

After these remarks, it becomes the less necessary to characterize the several narratives of which the "Mountain Bard" is composed. It is enough to say, that the wild and wonderful are their chief characteristics. Murders are committed, but the crimes revealed, in one case by these mute creatures, a pigeon and a dog, and in another, by a ghost, who cannot be laid until his tale is told and the guilty convicted. A priest, to compass his guilty ends, adds the arts of sorcery to his clerical influence; but in the midst of his incantations, and at the point of success, is suddenly despatched by a musket-shot. But when the poet descends from his favourite dreams and phantoms to the solid earth and every-day life, he becomes equally amusing and interesting, and the changing narratives are occupied with gallant knights, reaving moss-troopers, and devout Covenanters—the chief heroes of the legendary lore of Liddisdale—while "fierce wars and faithful loves," the tender, the sentimental, and pathetic, alternate in rapid succession. And it would have been strange if mirth had been wanting; for the Ettrick Shepherd, with all his poetical transcendentalism, was one of the heartiest of earth-

born laughers; and therefore, occasionally, amidst these tales, we hear his *guffaw*, with its loud and honest ring. Two of them especially are the very height of the comic. In the one, entitled the "Fray of Elibank," we have the well-known story of the compulsory marriage of handsome Will of Howden, who espoused "muckle-mou'd Meg," to avoid a worse noose than the matrimonial, which was offered him as the only alternative. In the other, called "May of the Moril Glen," we have a king and all his courtiers transformed into murderous Bluebeards, through the wiles of a beautiful lady, who engages to take for her husband the first of them who becomes a widower. Indeed, but for its extremely ludicrous character, this ballad might have held a high place in the collection of the "Queen's Wake," of which the "Mountain Bard" was evidently the originator, as well as the precursor.

THE MOUNTAIN BARD.

Sir David Graeme.

Any person who has read the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* with attention, must have observed what a singular degree of interest and feeling the simple ballad of "The twa Corbies" impresses upon the mind, which is rather increased than diminished by the unfinished state in which the story is left. It appears as if the bard had found his powers of description inadequate to a detail of the circumstances attending the fatal catastrophe, without suffering the interest already roused to subside, and had artfully consigned it over to the fancy of every reader to paint it in what way he chose; or else that he lamented the untimely fate of a knight, whose base treatment he durst not otherwise make known than in that short parabolical dialogue. That the original is not improved in the following ballad will too manifestly appear upon perusal; I think it, however, but just to acknowledge, that the idea was suggested to me by reading "The twa Corbies."

THE dow flew east, the dow flew west,[1]
The dow flew far ayont the fell;
An' sair at e'en she seemed distrest,
But what perplex'd her could not tell.

But aye she coo'd wi' mournfu' croon,
An' ruffled a' her feathers fair;
An' lookit sad as she war boun'
To leave the land for evermair.

The lady wept, an' some did blame,—
She didna blame the bonnie dow,
But sair she blamed Sir David Graeme,
Because the knight had broke his vow.

For he had sworn by the starns sae bright,
An' by their bed on the dewy green,
To meet her there on St. Lambert's night,
Whatever dangers lay between;

To risk his fortune an' his life
In bearing her frae her father's towers,
To gie her a' the lands o' Dryfe,[2]
An' the Enzie-holm wi' its bonnie bowers.

The day arrived, the evening came,
The lady looked wi' wistful ee;
But, O, alas! her noble Graeme
Frae e'en to morn she didna see.

An' she has sat her down an' grat;
The warld to her like a desert seemed;
An' she wyted this an' she wyted that,
But o' the real cause never dreamed.

The sun had drunk frae Keilder fell[3]
His beverage o' the morning dew;
The deer had crouched her in the dell,
The heather oped its bells o' blue;

The lambs were skipping on the brae,
The laverock hiche attour them sung,
An' aye she hailed the jocund day,
Till the wee, wee tabors o' heaven rung.

The lady to her window hied,
And it opened owre the banks o' Tyne;
"An', O, alak!" she said, an' sighed,
"Sure ilka breast is blythe but mine!

"Where hae ye been, my bonnie dow,
That I hae fed wi' the bread an' wine?
As roving a' the country through,
O, saw ye this fause knight o' mine?"

[1] I borrowed the above line from a beautiful old rhyme which I have often heard my mother repeat, but of which she knew no tradition; and from this introduction the part of the dove naturally arose. The rhyme runs thus:

"The heron flew east, the heron flew west,
The heron flew to the fair forest,
For there she saw a lovely bower,
Was a' clad o'er wi' lily flower;
And in the bower there was a bed,
Wi' silken sheets, an' weel down spread;
And in the bed there lay a knight,
Whose wounds did bleed both day and night:
And by the bed there stood a stane,
And there was set a leal maiden,
With silver needle and silken thread;
Stemming the wounds when they did bleed."—

[2] The river Dryfe forms the south-east district of Annandale; on its banks the ruins of the tower of Graeme still remain in considerable uniformity.

[3] Keilder Fells are those hills which lie eastward of the sources of North Tyne.

The dow sat down on the window tree,
An' she carried a lock o' yellow hair;
Then she perched upon that lady's knee,
An' carefully she placed it there.

"What can this mean? This lock's the same
That aince was mine. Whate'er betide,
This lock I gae to Sir David Graeme,
The flower of a' the Border side.

"He might hae sent it by squire or page,
An' no letten the wily dow steal't awa;
'Tis a matter for the lore and the counsels of age,
But the thing I canna read at a'."

The dow flew east, the dow flew west,
The dow she flew far ayont the fell,
An' back she came wi' panting breast,
Ere the ringing o' the castle bell.

She lighted ahiche on the holly-tap,
An' she cried, "cur-dow," an' fluttered her wing:
Then flew into that lady's lap,
An' there she placed a diamond ring.

"What can this mean? This ring is the same
That aince was mine. Whate'er betide,
This ring I gae to Sir David Graeme,
The flower of a' the Border side.

"He sends me back the love-tokens true!
Was ever poor maiden perplexed like me?
'Twould seem he's reclaimed his faith an' his vow,
But all is fauldit in mystery."

An' she has sat her down an' grat,
The world to her a desert seemed;
An' she wyted this an' she wyted that,
But o' the real cause never dreamed.

When, lo! Sir David's trusty hound,
Wi' humpling back, an' a waefu' ee,[1]
Came cringing in an' lookit around,
But his look was hopeless as could be.

He laid his head on that lady's knee,
An' he lookit as somebody he would name,
An' there was a language in his howe ee,
That was stronger than a tongue could frame.

She fed him wi' the milk an' the bread,
An' ilka good thing that he wad hae;
He lickit her hand, he coured his head,
Then slowly, slowly he slunkered away.

But she has eyed her fause knight's hound,
An' a' to see where he wad gae:
He whined, an' he howled, an' lookit around,
Then slowly, slowly he trudged away.

Then she's casten aff her coal black shoon,
An' her bonnie silken hose, sae glancin' an' sheen;
She kiltit her wilye coat an' broidered gown,
An' away she has linkit over the green.

She followed the hound owre muirs an' rocks,
Through mony a dell an' dowie glen,
Till frae her brow an' bonnie goud locks,
The dewe dreepit down like the drops o' rain.

An' aye she said, "My love may be hid,
An' darena come to the castle to me;
But him I will find and dearly I'll chide,
For lack o' stout heart an' courtesye.

"But ae kind press to his manly breast,
An' ae kind kiss in the moorland glen,
Will weel atone for a' that is past;—
O wae to the paukie snares o' men!"

An' aye she eyed the gray sloth hound,
As he windit owre Deadwater fell,
Till he came to the den wi' the moss inbound,
An' O, but it kythed a lonesome dell!

An' he waggit his tail, an' he fawned about,
Then he coured him down sae wearilye;
"Ah! yon's my love, I hae found him out,
He's lying waiting in the dell for me.

"To meet a knight near the fall of night
Alone in this untrodden wild,
It scarcely becomes a lady bright,
But I'll vow that the hound my steps beguiled."

Alack! whatever a maiden may say,
True has't been said, an' aften been sung,
The ee her heart's love will betray,
An' the secret will sirple frae her tongue.

"What ails my love, that he looks nae roun',
A lady's stately step to view?
Ah me! I hae neither stockings nor shoon,
An' my feet are sae white wi' the moorland dew.

"Sae sound as he sleeps in his hunting gear,
To waken him great pity would be;
Deaf is the man that caresna to hear,
And blind is he wha wantsna to see."

Sae saftly she treads the wee green swaird,
Wi' the lichens an' the ling a' fringed around
"My een are darkened wi' some wul-weird,
What ails my love, he sleeps sae sound?"

She gae ae look, she needit but ane,
For it left nae sweet uncertaintye;
She saw a wound through his shoulder bane,
An' in his brave breast two or three.

There wasna sic een on the Border green,
As the piercing een o' Sir David Graeme;
She glisked wi' her ee where these een should be,
But the raven had been there afore she came.

There's a cloud that fa's darker than the night,
An' darkly on that lady it came:
There's a sleep as deep as the sleep outright,—
'Tis without a feeling or a name;

[1] It is not long ago since a shepherd's dog watched his corpse in the snow among the mountains of this country, until nearly famished, and at last led to the discovery of the body of his disfigured master.

'Tis a dull an' a dreamless lethargye,
For the spirit strays owre vale an' hill,
An' the bosom is left a vacancy,
An' when it comes back it is darker still.

O shepherd lift that comely corpse,
Well may you see no wound is there;
There's a faint rose 'mid the bright dew drops,
An' they have not wet her glossy hair.

There's a lady has lived in Hoswood tower,
'Tis seven years past on St. Lambert's day,
An' aye when comes the vesper hour
These words an' no more can she say:

"They slew my love on the wild Swaird green,
As he was on his way to me;
An' the ravens picked his bonnie blue een,
An' the tongue that was formed for courtesye.

"My brothers they slew my comely knight,
An' his grave is red blood to the brim:
I thought to have slept out the lang, lang night,
But they've wakened me, and wakened not him!"

THE PEDLAR.

This ballad is founded on a fact, which has been magnified by popular credulity and superstition into the terrible story which follows. It is here related, according to the *best informed* old people about Ettrick, as nearly as is consistent with the method pursued in telling it. I need not inform the reader, that every part of it is believed by them to be absolute truth.

'Twas late, late, late on a Saturday's night,
The moon was set an' the wind was lown:
The lazy mist crap down frae the height,
An' the dim blue lowe glimmered laigh on the downe.

O'er the rank-scented fen the bleeter was warping,
High on the black muir the foxes did howl,
All by the lone hearth the cricket sat harping,
An' far on the air came the notes o' the owl.

The linn it was rowting adown frae the height,
An' the water was soughin sae goustilye:
O it was sic an eerieisome Saturday night,
As ane in a lifetime hardly wad see,

When the lady o' Thirlestane rose in her sleep,[1]
An' she shrieked sae loud that her maid ran to see;
Her een they were set, an' her voice it was deep,
An' she shook like the leaf o' the aspen tree.

"O where is the pedlar I drave frae the ha',
That pled sae sair to tarry wi' me?"
"He's gane to the mill, for the miller sells ale,
An' the pedlar's as weel as a man can be."

"I wish he had staid, he sae earnestly prayed,
An' he hight a braw pearling in present to gie;
But I was sae hard that I couldna regard,
Tho' I saw the saut tear trickle fast frae his ee.

"But O, what a terrible vision I've seen,
The pedlar a' mangled—most shocking to see!
An' he gapit an' waggit, an' stared wi' his een,
An' he seemed to lay a' the blame upo' me.

"I fear that in life he will ne'er mair be seen,
An' the very suspicion o't terrifies me:
I wadna hae siccan a vision again,
For a' the gude kye upon Thirlestane lee.

"Yet wha wad hae heart the poor pedlar to kill?
O Grizzy, my girl, will ye gang an' see!
If the pedlar is safe an' alive at the mill,
A merk o' gude money I'll gie unto thee."

"O lady, 'tis dark, an' I heard the dead-bell;
An' I darena gae yonder for goud nor fee:[2]
But the miller has lodgings might serve yoursel,
An' the pedlar's as weel as a pedlar can be.

[1] The lady here alluded to was the second wife of Sir Robert Scott, the last knight of Thirlestane, of whom the reader shall hear further. Thirlestane is situated high on the Ettrick, and was the baronial castle of the Scotts of Thirlestane. It is now the property of the Right Honourable Lord Napier, who wears the arms of that ancient house. The mill is still on the old site.

[2] By the dead-bell is meant the tinkling in the ears, which our peasantry in the country regard as a secret intelligence of some friend's decease. Thus this natural occurrence strikes many with a superstitous awe. This reminds me of a trifling anecdote, which I will here relate as an instance. Our two servant-girls agreed to go an errand of their own, one night after supper, to a considerable distance, from which I strove to persuade them, but could not prevail. So, after going to the apartment where I slept, I took a drinking glass, and, coming close to the back of the door, made two or three sweeps round the lips of the glass with my finger, which caused a loud shrill noise. I then overheard the following dialogue: —*B.* "Ah, mercy! the dead-bell went through my head just now with such a knell as I never heard." *J.* "I heard it too." *B* "Did you indeed? That is remarkable. I never knew of two hearing it at the same time before." *J.* "We will not go to Midgehope to-night." *B.* "I would not go for all the world. I shall warrant it is my poor brother Wat: who knows what these wild Irishes may have done to him?"

Amongst people less conversant in the manners of the cottage than I have been, it may reasonably be suspected that I am prone to magnify these vulgar superstitions, in order to give countenance to several of them hinted at in the ballads. Therefore, as this book is designed solely for amusement, I hope I shall be excused for here detailing a few more of them, which still linger amongst the wilds of the country to this day, and which I have been an eye-witness to a thousand times; and from these the reader may judge what they must have been in the times to which these ballads refer.

In addition to the dead-bell.—If one of the ears is at any time seized with a glowing heat, which may very easily happen, if exposed to a good fire or a strong wind, they straight conclude that some person is talking of them. They then turn to such as are near them, and put the following question: "*Right lug, left lug, whilk lug glows?*" That person immediately guesseth; and if the one that glows is hit upon, they say, "You love me better than they who talk of me;" and so conclude they are all ill spoken of. But if the guesser hits upon the wrong *lug*, they say, "You love me worse than they who talk of me; and rest satisfied that some person is saying good of them. When the nostrils itch, they are sure to hear tell of some person being dead; and the *death-watch*, the *death-tap*, and the *death-swap*, which last is a loud sharp stroke, are still current; whilst the belief in wraiths, ghaists, and bogles is little or nothing abated.

When they sneeze on first stepping out of bed in the morning, they are thence certified that strangers will be there in

She sat till day, an' she sent wi' fear,—
The miller said there he never had been;
She went to the kirk an' speered for him there,
But the pedlar in life was never mair seen.

Frae aisle to aisle she lookit wi' care;
Frae pew to pew she hurried her een,
An' a' to see if the pedlar was there,
But the pedlar in life was never mair seen.

But late, late, late on a Saturday's night,
As the laird was walking alang the lee,
A silly auld pedlar came by on his right,
An' a muckle green pack on his shoulders had he.

"O where are ye gaun, ye beggarly loun?
Ye's nouther get lodging nor sale frae me!"
He turned him about, an' the blude it ran down,
An' his throat was a' hackered, an' ghastly was he.

Then straight wi' a sound he sank i' the ground,
An' a fire-flaught out o' the place did flee!
To try a bit prayer the laird clappet down,
As flat an' as feared as a body could be.

He fainted:—but soon as he gathered his breath,
He tauld what a terrible sight he had seen:
The devil a' woundit, an' bleedin' to death,
In shape o' a pedlar upo' the mill-green.

The lady she shrickit, the door it was steekit,
The servants were glad that the devil was gane;
But ilk Saturday's night, when faded the light,
Near the mill-house the poor bleeding pedlar was seen,

An' aye when passengers by were gaun,
A doolfu' voice came frae the mill-ee,
At the turn o' the night when the clock struck one,
Cryin', "O Rob Riddle, hae mercy on me!"[1]

The place was harassed, the mill was laid waste,[2]
The miller he fled to a far countrye;
But aye at e'en the pedlar was seen,
An' at midnight the voice came frae the mill-ee.

The lady frae hame wad never mair budge,
From the time that the sun gade over the hill;
An' now she had a' the puir bodies to lodge,
As nane durst gae on for the ghost o' the mill.

the course of the day, in numbers corresponding to the times they sneeze; and if a feather, a straw, or any such thing, be observed hanging at a dog's nose or beard, they call that a *guest*, and are sure of the approach of a stranger. If it hang long at the dog's nose, the visitant is to stay long; but if it fall instantly away, the person is to stay a short time. They judge also, from the length of this *guest*, what will be the size of the real one, and from its shape, whether it will be a man or a woman: and they watch carefully on what part of the floor it drops, as it is on that very spot the stranger will sit. And there is scarcely a shepherd in the whole country, who, if he chances to find one of his flock dead on a Sabbath, is not thence assured that he will have two or three more in the course of the week. During the season that ewes are milked, the bught door is always carefully shut at even; and the reason they assign for this is, that when it is negligently left open, the witches and fairies never miss the opportunity of dancing in it all night. Nothing in the world can be more ridiculous than this supposition: for the bught is commonly so foul, that they are obliged to wade to the ancles in mud, consequently the witches could not find a more inconvenient spot for dancing on the whole farm. Many, however, still adhere to that custom; and I was once present when an old shoe was found in the bught that none of them would claim, and they gravely and rationally concluded that one of the witches had lost it while dancing in the night. When any of them eat an egg, as soon as they have emptied it of its contents, they always crush the shell. An English gentleman asked Mr. William Laidlaw why the Scots did that. He being well acquainted with the old adage, replied, "That it was for fear the witches got them to sail over to Flanders in." "What though they should," said he: "are you so much afraid that the witches should leave you?"

Whether it proceeds from a certain habit of body in the cattle, from their food, or what is the fundamental cause of it, I cannot tell; but the milk of whole herds of cows is liable at times to a strange infection, whereby it is converted into a tough jelly as soon as it cools from the udder, and is thus rendered loathsome and unfit for use; this being a great loss and grievance to the owner. It will scarcely be believed that there are very many of the families in Ettrick and its vicinity, and some most respectable ones, who have, at some period in the present age, been driven to use very gross incantations for the removal of this from their cattle, which they believe to proceed from witchcraft. The effects of these are so apparent on the milk in future, and so well attested, that the circumstance is of itself sufficient to stagger the resolution of the most obstinate misbeliever in witchcraft, if not finally to convert him. I am not so thoroughly initiated into this mystery as to describe it minutely; but, in the first place, a fire is set on, and surrounded with green turfs, in which a great number of pins are stuck. A certain portion of the milk of each cow, so infected, is then hung on in a pot, with a horse's shoe, and a black dish, with its mouth downward, placed in it. The doors are then carefully shut, and the milk continues to boil; and the first person who comes to that house afterwards is always blamed for the mischief. But the poor old women are generally suspected. There are, besides, a number of other *freets*, too tedious and too common to be minutely described here: such as spilling salt on the ground, or milk in the fire; suffering the dishwater to boil, without putting a peat in it; shavings at candles; thirteen in a company, &c.; all which are ominous, or productive of their particular effects.

Many are apt to despise their poor illiterate countrymen for these weak and superstitious notions; but I am still of opinion, that in the circumstance of their attaching credit to them, there is as much to praise as to blame. Let it be considered, that their means of information have not been adequate to the removal of these; while on the other hand, they have been used to hear them related, and attested as truths, by the very persons whom they were bound to reverence and believe.

[1] In addition to this cry of despair, which was sometimes heard from the mill, it was common for the ghost to go down to the side of the mill-dam at a certain hour of the night, calling out, "Ho, Rob Riddle, come home to your supper, your sowens are cold!" To account for this, tradition adds, that the miller confessed at his death, that the pedlar came down to the mill to inform him that it was wearing late, and that he must come home to his supper; and that he took that opportunity to murder him. At other times it was heard crying in a lamentable voice, "O saw ye ought of John Watters? Nobody has seen John Watters!" This, it seems, was the pedlar's name.

[2] To such a height did the horror of this apparition arrive in Ettrick, that it is certain there are few in the parish who durst go to or by the mill after sunset: but, unlike many of the country bogles, which assume a variety of fantastical shapes, this never appeared otherwise than in the shape of a pedlar with a green pack on his back; and so simple and natural was his whole deportment, that few ever suspected him for the spirit, until he vanished away. He once came so near two men in the twilight, that they familiarly offered him snuff, when he instantly sunk into the earth, and left his companions in a state of insensibility.

But the minister there was a body o' skill,
Nae feared for devil or spirit was he;[1]
An' he's gane awa to watch at the mill,
To see if this turbulent ghaist he could see.

He prayed an' he read, an' he sent them to bed,
An' the Bible anunder his arm took he,
An' round an' round the mill-house he gade,
To try if this terrible sight he could see.[2]

Wi' a shivering groan the pedlar came on,
An' the muckle green pack on his shoulders had he;
But he nouther had flesh, blude, nor bone,
For the moon shone through his thin bodye.

The ducks they whackit, the dogs they yowled,
The herons they skraiched maist piteouslie;
An' the horses they snorkit for miles around,
While the priest an' the pedlar together might be.

The minister opened the haly book,
An' charged him by a' the Sacred Three,
To tell why that ghastly figure he took,
To terrify a' the hale countrye.

The pedlar he opened his fleshless gums,
An' siccan a voice ne'er strack the ear;
It was like the stound an' whistling sound
Of the crannied wind at midnight drear.

"O weel," he said, "may I rise frae the dead,
Guilt presses the hardest nearest hame;
An' here 'tis sae new that ye a' may rue,
An' yon proud lady was a' the blame.

"My body was butchered within that mill,
My banes lie under the inner mill-wheel,
An' here my spirit maun wander, until
Some crimes an' villanies I can reveal:

"I robbed my niece of three hundred pounds,
Which Providence suffered me not to enjoy;
For the sake of that money I gat my death's wounds;
The miller me kenned, but he missed his ploy.

"The money lies buried on Balderstone hill,
Beneath the mid bourack o' three times three:
O gie't to the owners, kind sir, an' it will
Bring wonderfu' comfort an' rest unto me.

[1] The great and worthy Mr. Boston was the person who is said to have laid this ghost; and the people of Ettrick are much disappointed at finding no mention made of it in his memoirs; but some yet alive have heard John Corry, who was his servant, tell the following story.—One Saturday afternoon, Mr. Boston came to him and said, "John, you must rise early on Monday, and get a kilnful of oats dried before day." "You know very well, master," said John, "that I dare not for my breath go to the mill before day." "John," said he, "I tell you to go, and I will answer for it, that nothing shall molest you." John, who revered his master, went away, determined to obey; "but that very night," said John, "he went to the mill, prayed with the family, and staid very late, but charged them not to mention it." On Monday morning John arose at two o'clock, took a horse, and went to the mill, which is scarcely a mile below the kirk; and about a bowshot west of the mill, Mr. Boston came running by him, buttoned in his great coat, but was so wrapped in thought, that he neither perceived his servant nor his horse. When he came home at even, Mr. Boston said to him, "Well, John, have you seen the pedlar?" "No, no, sir," said John, "there was nothing troubled me; but I saw that you were yonder before me this morning." "I did not know that you saw me," said he, "nor did I wish to be seen, John; therefore say nothing of it." This was in March, and in May following the mill was repaired, when the remains of the pedlar and his pack were actually found, and the hearts of the poor people set at ease: for it is a received opinion, that if the body, or bones, or any part, of a murdered person are found, the ghost is then at rest, and that it leaves mankind to find out the rest. I shall only mention another instance of this. There is a place below Yarrow Kirk called Bell's Lakes, which was for a great number of years the terror of the whole neighbourhood, from a supposition that it was haunted by a ghost: I believe *the Bogle of Bell's Lakes* has been heard of through a great part of the south of Scotland. It happened at length, that a man and his wife were casting peats at Craighopehead, a full mile from the Lakes; and coming to a loose place in the morass, his spade slipped lightly down, and stuck fast in something below; but judge of their surprise, when, on pulling it out, a man's head stuck on it, with long auburn hair, and so fresh that every feature was distinguishable. This happened in the author's remembrance; and it was supposed that it was the head of one Adam Hyslop, who had vanished about forty years before, and was always supposed to have left the country. Since that discovery, however, Bell's Lakes have been as free of bogles as any other place.

[2] A story similar to this of Mr. Boston and the pedlar, is told of a contemporary of his, the Rev. Henry Davieson of Galashiels. The ghost of an old wicked laird of Buckholm, in that parish, who had died a long time previous to that period, so haunted and harassed the house, that they could not get a servant to stay about it: whereupon, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of the family, Mr. Davieson went up one night to speak to and rebuke it. After supper he prayed with the family, and then charged them all, as they valued their peace, to go quietly to their beds. This injunction they all obeyed; but one lady lay down without undressing, and, from a small aperture in the partition which separated her chamber from the apartment in which he was left, watched all his motions. She said that he searched long in the Bible, and folded down leaves in certain places. He then kneeled and prayed; and afterwards taking the Bible, and putting his fingers in at the places he had marked, he took it below his arm and went out. Prompted by curiosity, she followed him, unperceived, through several of the haunted lanes. She sometimes heard him muttering, but saw nothing. When he came to his chamber, he acted the same scene over again; and she followed him at a distance round all the town, as before. When he came to his chamber the third time, he prayed with greater fervency than ever; and when he rose, and took the Bible to go out, his looks were so stern and severe, that she was awed at the very sight of them; and on following him out of the court-yard, she was seized with an involuntary terror, and fled back to her apartment. When the family assembled next morning to prayers, he conjured them to tell him who of them were out of bed last night; and the rest all denying, the lady confessed the whole. "I knew," said he, "there was somebody watching me, at which I was troubled: but it was lucky for you that you did not follow me the third time; for, had you seen what I saw, you had never been yourself again. But you may now safely go out and in, up stairs and down stairs, at all hours of the night; for you will never more be troubled with old Buckholm."

Whether these traditions have taken their origin from a much earlier period, and have, by later generations, been brought down and ascribed to these well-known characters; or whether these worthy men, in commiseration of the ideal sufferings of their visionary parishioners, have really condescended to these sham watchings, it is not now easy to determine. But an age singular as that was for devotion, would readily be as much so for superstition; for, even to this day, the country people who have the deepest sense of religion, are always those who believe most firmly in supernatural agency.

"'Tis drawing to day, nae mair I can say,
My message I trust, good father, with thee;
If the black cock should craw, when I am awa,
O weary, an' weary! what wad come o' me?"

Wi' a sound like a horn away he was borne;
The grass was a' fired where the spirit had been;
An' certain it is, from that day to this,
The ghost o' the pedlar was never mair seen.

The mill was repaired, an' low i' the yird,
The banes lay under the inner mill-wheel;
The box an' the ellwand beside him war hid,
An' mony a thimble an' mony a seal.

Must the scene of iniquity cursed remain?
Can this bear the stamp of the heavenly seal?
Yet certain it is, from that day to this,
The millers o' Thirlestane ne'er hae done weel.[1]

But there was an auld mason wha wrought at the mill,
In the rules o' Providence skilfu' was he;
He keepit a bane o' the pedlar's heel,
An' a queerer wee bane you never did see.

The miller had fled to the forest o' Jed,
But time had now grizzled his haffets wi' snaw;
He was crookit an' auld, an' his head was turned bald,
Yet his joke he could brik wi' the best o' them a'.

Away to the Border the mason he ran,
To try wi' the bane if the miller was fey;
And into a smiddie wi' mony a man,
He fand him a gaffin fu' gaily that day.

The mason he crackit, the mason he taukit,
Of a' curiosities mighty an' mean;
Then pu'd out the bane, an' declared there was nane
Who in Britain had ever the equal o't seen.

Then ilka ane took it, an' ilka ane lookit,
An' ilka ane ca'd it a comical bane;
To the miller it goes, wha wi' specks on his nose,
To hae an' to view it was wondrous fain.

But what was his horror, as leaning he stood,
An' what the surprise o' his cronies around,
When the little wee bane fell a streamin' wi' blood,
Which dyed a' his fingers, an' ran to the ground!

They charged him wi' murder, an' a' the hale crew
Cried the truth should be told should they bring it frae hell;
A red goad o' airn frae the fire they drew,
An' they swore they wad spit him unless he wad tell.

"O hald," said the mason, "for how can this be?
You'll find you're all out when the truth I reveal;
At fair Thirlestane I gat this wee bane,
Deep buried anunder the inner mill-wheel."

"O God!" said the wretch, wi' the tear in his ee,
"O pity a creature lang doomed to despair;
A silly auld pedlar, wha begged of me
For mercy, I murdered, and buried him there!"

To Jeddart they hauled the auld miller wi' speed,
An' they hangit him dead on a high gallows-tree;
An' *afterwards* they in full counsel agreed,
That Rob Riddle he richly deserved to dee.[2]

The thief may escape the lash and the rape,
The liar and swearer their vile hides may save,
The wrecker of unity pass with impunity,
But whan gat the murd'rer in peace to his grave?

Ca't not superstition, if reason you find it,
Nor laugh at a story attestit sae weel;
For lang will the *facts* i' the Forest be mindit,
O' the ghaist, an' the bane o' the pedlar's heel.

[1] Though a pretext can scarcely be found in the annals of superstition sufficient to authorize the ascribing of this to the murder of the pedlar so many ages before, yet the misfortunes attending the millers of Thirlestane have become proverbial: and when any of the neighbours occasionally mention this, along with it the murder of the pedlar is always hinted at. And it is scarcely thirty years since one of the millers was tried for his life, for scoring a woman whom he supposed to be a witch. He had long suspected her as the cause of all the misfortunes attending him, and, enticing her into the kiln one Sabbath evening, he seized her, and cut the shape of the cross on her forehead. This is called *scoring aboon the breath*, and overthrows their power of doing any further mischief.

[2] This alludes to an old and very common proverb, "That such a one will get Jeddart justice:" which is, first to hang a man, and then judge whether he was guilty or not.

GILMANSCLEUCH.

FOUNDED UPON AN ANCIENT FAMILY TRADITION.

"Whair hae ye laid the goud, Peggye,
Ye gat on New-yeir's-day?
I lookit ilka day to see
Ye drest in fine array;

"But nouther kirtle, cap, nor gowne,
To Peggye has come hame:
Whair hae ye stowed the goud, dochter?
I fear ye hae been to blame."

"My goud it was my ain, father;
A gift is ever free;
An' when I need my goud agene,
It winna be tint to me."

"O hae ye sent it to a friend,
Or lent it to a fae?
Or gien it to some fause leman,
To breed ye mickle wae?"

"I hae na sent it to a friend,
Nor lent it to a fae;
An' never man without your ken,
Sal cause me joy or wae.

"I gae it to a poor auld man,
Came shivering to the door;
An' when I heard his waesome tale,
I wust my treasure more."

"What was the beggar's tale, Peggye?
I fain wald hear it o'er;
I fain wald hear that wylie tale
That drained thy little store."

"His hair was like the thristle doune,
His cheeks were furred wi' tyme,
His beard was like a bush o' lyng,
When silvered o'er wi' ryme.

"He lifted up his languid eye,
Whilk better days had seen;
An' aye he heaved the mournfu' sigh,
An' the saut teirs fell atween.

"He took me by the hands, and saide,
While pleasantly he smiled,
'O weel to you, my little flower,
That blumes in desart wilde;

"'An' may ye never feel the waes
That lang hae followit me,
Bereavit of a' my gudes and gear,
My friends and familye!

"'In Gilmanscleuch, beneath the heuch,
My fathers lang did dwell;
Aye foremost, under bauld Bucccleuch,
A foreign fae to quell.

"'Ilk petty robber through the lands
They taucht to stand in awe,
An' aften checked the plundering bands
O' their kinsman Tushilaw.

"'But when the bush was in the flush,
An' fairer there was nane,
Ae blast did all its honours crush,
An' Gilmanscleuch is gane!

"'I had ane brother lithe an' stronge,
But froward, fierce, an' keen;
Ane only sister, sweet an' young,
Her name was luvely Jean.

"'Her hair was like the threads of goud,
Her cheeks of rosy hue,
Her eyne were like the huntin' hawks,
That owre the cassel flew.

"'Of fairest fashion was her form,
Her skin the driven snaw
That's drifted by the wintery storm
On lofty Gilman's-law:

"'Her browe nae blink of scorninge wore,
Her teeth were ivorie,
Her lips the little purple floure
That blumes on Bailley-lee.

"'O true, true was the reade that said
That beauty's but a snare;
Young Jock o' Harden her betrayed,
Whilk grievit us wonder sair.

"'My brother Adam stormed in wrathe,
An' swore in angry mood,
Either to rychte his dear sister,
Or shed the traytor's blood.

"'I kend his honour fair an' firm,
An' didna doubt his faithe;
But being the youngest o' seven brethren,
To marry he was laithe.

"'When June had decked the braes in grene,
An' flushed the forest tree;
When young deers ranne on ilka hill,
An' lambs on ilka lee;

"'A shepherd frae our mountains hied,
Ane ill death mot he dee!
'O master, master, haste!' he cried,
'O haste alang wi' me!

"'Our ewes are banished frae the glen,
Their lambs are dri'en away,
The fairest raes on Eldin braes
Are Jock o' Harden's prey.

"'His hounds are ringing through your woods,
An' manye deere are slaine:
Ane herd is fled to Douglas-craig,
An' ne'er will turn againe.

"'Your brother Adam, stalworth still,
I warned on yon hill-side;
An' he's awa to Yarrow's banks
As fast as he can ride.'

"'O ill betide thy haste, young man!
Thou micht hae tald it me:
Thou kend to hunt on all my lande
The Harden lads were free.

"'Gae saddel me my milk-white steed,
Gae saddel him suddenlye;
To Yarrow banks I'll hie wi' speed,
This bauld hunter to see.'

"'But low, low down, on Sundhope broom
My brother Harden spyde,
An' with a stern an' furious look
He up to him did ride.

'Was't not enough, thou traytor strong,
My sister to betray?
That thou shouldst scare my feebil ewes,
An' chase their lambs away?

'Thy hounds are ringing through our woods,
Our choizest deers are slaine,
An' hundreds fledd to Stuart's hills
Will ne'er returne againe.'

'It sets thee weel, thou haughtye youth,
To bend such taunts on me:
Oft hae you hunted Harden's hills,
An' nae man hindered thee.'

'But wilt thou wedd my deare sister?
Now tell me—ay or nay.'
'Nae question will I answer thee,
That's speerit in sic a way.

'Tak this for truth, I ne'er meant ill
To nouther thee nor thine.'
Then spurrit his steed against the hill,
Was flecter than the hynde.

"'He sett a buglet to his mouth,
An' blew baith loude and clear;
A sign to all his merry men
Their huntin' to forbeir.

"'O turn thee, turn thee, traytor stronge!'
Cried Adam bitterlie;
'Nae haughty Scott, of Harden's kin,
Sal proudlye scool on me.

'Now draw thy sword, or gie thy word,
For one of them I'll have,
Or to thy face I'll thee disgrace,
An' ca' thee coward knave.'

"'He sprang frae aff his coal-black steed,
An' tied him to a wande;
Then threw his bonnet aff his head,
An' drew his deadly brande.

"'An' lang they foucht, an' sair they foucht,
Wi' swords of mettyl kene,
Till clotted blude, in mony a spot,
Was sprynkelit on the grene.

"'An' lang they foucht, an' sair they foucht;
For braiver there were nane:
Braive Adam's thigh was bathit i' blude,
An' Harden's coller-bane.

"'Though Adam was baith stark an' gude,
Nae langer could he stande:
His hand claive to his hivvye sword,
His knees plett lyke the wande.

"'He leanit himsel agenst ane aek,
Nae mair could act his parte.
A wudman then sprang frae the broom,
An' pierced young Harden's hearte.

"'But word or groane he wheelit him round,
An' kluve his heide in twaine;
Then calmlye laid him on the grene,
Never to rise againe.

"'I raide owre heicht, I raide through howe,
An' ferr outstrippit the wynde,
An' sent my voice the forest through,
But naething could I fynde.

"'Whan I cam there, the dysmal sychte
Mochte melt ane hearte of stane;
My brother fent an' bleiden lay,
Young Harden neirlye gane.

'An' art thou there, O Gilmanscleuch?'
Wi' faltren tongue he cried;
'Hadst thou arrivit tyme aneuch,
Thy kinsman hadna died.

'Be kind unto thy sister Jean,
Whatever may betide:
This nycht I meant, at Gilmanscleuch,
To maik of her my bryde.

'But this sad fray, this fatal daye,
May breid baith dule an payne;
My freekle brethren ne'er will staye,
Till they're avengit or slayne.'

"'The wudman sleips in Sundhope broom,
Into a lowlye grave:
Young Jock they bure to Harden's tombe,
An' laide him wi' the laive.

"'Thus fell that braive an' comelye youth,
Whose arm was like the steel,
Whose very look was open truth,
Whose heart was true an' leel.

"'It's now full three-an'-thirty zeirs
Syn that unhappy daye,
An' late I saw his comelye corpse,
Without the least decaye.

"'The garland cross his breist aboon
Still held its varied hue;
The roses bloomit upon his shoon,
As faire as if they grew.

"'I raised our vassals ane an' a',
Wi' mickle care an' payne,
Expecting Harden's furious sons,
Wi' a' their father's trayne.

"'But Harden was a weirdly man,
A cunning tod was he:
He lockit his sons in prison strang,
An' wi' him bure the key.

"'An' he's awa to Holyrood,
Amang our nobles a',
With bonnet lyke a girdel braid,
An' hayre like Craighope snaw.

"'His coat was of the forest grene,
Wi' buttons lyke the moon;
His breiks were o' the guid buckskyne,
Wi' a' the hayre aboon;

"'His twa-hand sword hang round his neck,
An' rattled at his heel;
The rowels of his silver spurs
Were of the Rippon steel;

"'His hose were braced wi' chains o' airn,
An' round wi' tassels hung:
At ilka tramp o' Harden's heel,
The royal arches rung.

"'Sae braid an' buirdlye was his bouke,
His glance sae gruff to bide,
Whene'er his braid bonnette appearit,
The menialis stepped asyde.

"'The courtlye nobles of the north
The chief with favour eyed,
For Harden's form an' Harden's look
Were hard to be denied.

"'He made his plaint unto our king,
An' magnified the deed;
An' high Buccleuch, with scarce fayre playe,
Made Harden better speed.

"'Ane grant of all our lands sae fayre,
The king to him has gien;
An' a' the Scotts of Gilmanscleuch
Were outlawed ilka ane.

"'The time I missit, an' never wissit
Of siccan a weird for me,
Till I got word frae kind Traquair,
The country soon to flee;

"'Else me an' mine nae friend wad fynd,
But fa' ane easy prey,
While yet my brother weaklye was,
An' scarce could bruik the way.

"'Now I hae foucht in foreign fields,
In mony a bluidy fray,
But langed to see my native hills,
Afore my dying day.

"'My brother fell in Hungarye,
When fighting by my side;
My luckless sister bore ane son,
But broke hir hearte an' died.

"'That son, now a' my earthly care
Of port an' stature fine:
He has thine eye, an' is thy blude,
As weel as he is mine.

"'For me, I'm but a puir auld man,
Whom nane regards ava;
The peaceful grave will end my care,
Where I maun shortly fa'.'—

"I ga'e him a' my goud, father,
I gat on New-yeir's-day,
An' welcomed him to Harden-ha',
With us a while to stay."

"My sweet Peggye, my kind Peggye,
Ye aye were dear to me:
For ilka bonnet-piece ye ga'e,
My love, ye sal hae three.

"Auld Gilmanscleuch shall share wi' me
The table an' the ha';
We'll tell of a' our doughty deeds,
At hame an' far awa.

"That youth my hapless brother's son,
Who bears our eye an' name,
Shalle farm the lands of Gilmanscleuch,
While Harden halds the same.

"Nae rent, nor kane, nor service mean,
I'll ask of him at a';
Only to stand at my ryght hand,
When Branxholm gies the ca'.

"A Scott mnst aye support ane Scott,
When as he synketh low;
But he that proudlye lifts his heide
Must learne his place to knowe."

THE FRAY OF ELIBANK.

This ballad is likewise founded on a well-known fact. The particulars are related in the song literally as they happened, and some further explanations are added in the notes.

O wha hasna heard o' the bauld Juden Murray,
The lord o' the Elibank castle sae high?[1]

[1] Sir Gideon Murray, ancestor of the present Lord Elibank, was the third son of Andrew Murray of Blackbarony. In his youth he applied to the study of theology; but happening unfortunately to kill a man of the name of Aitchison, he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle. He now gave up all thoughts of the church, and became chamberlain to his nephew of the half blood, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, which trust he managed with great prudence. He was first designed of Glenpottie, and had a charter of the lands of Elibank, alias Eliburne, in the county of Selkirk, with a salmon fishing in Tweed, 15th March, 1594—5. He now took the style of Elibank, and had charters to himself, and Margaret Pentland his wife, of the lands of Langschaw, in Roxburghshire, 6th June, 1606, and 2d July, 1618. He had several other charters under the great seal, of Redhead in the county of Peebles, Eldinghope in the county of Selkirk, and Ballincrief in the county of Haddington, &c. He received the honour of knighthood in 1605; was constituted treasurer-depute in 1611, under the Earl of Somerset, high treasurer; and appointed one of the lords of session, 2d November, 1613.

The entire direction of the revenue of Scotland was in Sir Gideon Murray's hands, and he managed it to such advantage, that he not only repaired the palaces and castles of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, Dunfermline, Falkland, and Dumbarton, adding to them all new edifices, but had so much money in the treasury, when King James VI. visited Scotland in 1617, that he defrayed the whole charges of his majesty and his court during his abode in that country, where the king appeared with as much splendour as in England. James had a very high sense of his services. Sir Gideon, visiting his majesty in England, and happening in the king's bed-chamber to let his glove fall, James, although stiff and old, stooped down, and gave him his glove again, saying, "My predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, thought she did a favour to any man who was speaking to her when she let her glove fall, that he might take it up and give it to her again; but, sir, you may say a king lifted up your glove." Yet for all that, his majesty was induced to believe an accusation given by James Stewart, Lord Ochiltree, against Sir Gideon Murray, charging him with offences committed in his office of

An' wha hasna heard o' that notable foray,
Whan Willie o' Harden was catched wi' the kye?[1]

Auld Harden was ever the king o' gude fellows,
His tables were filled in the room an' the ha';
But peace on the Border, that thinned his keyloes,
An' want for his lads was the warst thing of a'.

Young Harden was bauld of heart as a lion,
An' langed his skill an' his courage to try:
Stout Willie o' Fauldshope ae night he did cry on,
Frae danger or peril wha never wad fly.[2]

"O Willie, ye ken our retainers are mony,
Our kye they rowt thin on the loan an' the lea;
A drove we maun hae for our pastures sae bonny,
Or Harden's *ae cow* ance again we may see.

"Fain wad I, but darena, gang over the Border;
Bucceleuch wad restrain us, an' ruin us quite;
He's bound to keep a' the wide marches in order:
Then where shall we gae, an' we'll venture to-night?"

"O master, ye ken how the Murrays have ground you,
An' aften caroused on your beef an' your veal;
Yet spite o' your wiles an' your spies, they hae shunned you:
A Murray is kittler to catch than the deil.

"Sly Juden o' Eli's grown doyted an' silly,
He sits wi' his women frae morning till e'en;
Yet three hunder gude kye has the thrifty auld billy,
As fair sleckit keyloes as ever were seen."

"Then, Willie, this night we'll gae herry auld Juden;
Nae danger I fear when thy weapon I see:
That time when we vanquished the outlaw o' Sowden,
The best o' his men were mishackered by thee.

"If we had his kye in the byres of Aekwood,
He's welcome to claim them the best way he can:
Right sair he'll be puzzled his title to make good,
For a' he's a cunning an' dexterous man."

Auld Juden he strayed by the side o' the river,
When loud cried the warder on Haginshaw height,
"Ho, Juden, take care, or you're ruined for ever!
The bugle of Aekwood is sounding to-night."

"Ha, faith!" then quo' Juden, "they're nae men to lippen;
I wonder sae lang frae a fray they could cease.
Gae blaw the wee horn, gar my villains come trippin':
I have o'er mony kye to get restit in peace."

Wi' that a swaup fellow came pufflin' an' blawin,'
Frae high Philip-cairn a' the gate he had run:
"O Juden, be handy, an' countna the lawin,
But warn well an' arm well, or else ye're undone!

"Young Willie o' Harden has crossed the Yarrow,
Wi' mony a hardy an' desperate man:
The Hoggs an' the Brydens have brought him to dare you,[3]
For the Wild Boar of Fauldshope he strides in the van."

"God's mercy!" quo Juden, "gae blaw the great bugle;
Warn Plora, Traquair, an' the fierce Hollowlee.
We'll gie them a fleg: but I like that cursed Hogg ill;
Nae devil in hell but I rather wad see.

"To him men in arms are the same thing as thristles;
At Aneram an' Sowden his prowess I saw:
But a bullet or arrow will supple his bristles,
An' lay him as laigh as the least o' them a'."

The kye they lay down by the side of the Weel,
On the Elibank craig, an' the Ashiesteel bourn;
An' ere the king's elwand came over the hill,
Afore Will an' his men rattled mony a horn.

treasurer-depute against the king and his lieges. He was sent down a prisoner to Scotland, and a day appointed for his trial. This he took so much to heart, that he abstained from food for several days, and he died on the 28th June, 1621, after he had kept his house twenty days or thereby, stupified and silent, or at least speaking little or to no purpose.

[1] In the first and second editions this hero was denominated Wat. I took the story from the vague traditions of the country, and on seeing some of the family records, I perceive that these have been generally incorrect. The story is true; but the youth's name was William. He was the eldest son of Wat Scott of Harden, and his lady, the celebrated Mary Scott, the flower of Yarrow.

[2] This man's name was William Hogg, better known by the epithet of *the Wild Boar of Fauldshope*. Tradition reports him as a man of unequalled strength, courage, and ferocity. He was Harden's chief champion, and in great favour with his master, until once, by his temerity, he led him into a scrape that had well nigh cost him his life. It is never positively said what this scrape was, but there is reason to suppose it was the fray of Elibank.

[3] The author's progenitors possessed the lands of Fauldshope, under the Scotts of Harden, for ages; my father says, for a period of 400 years: until the extravagance of John Scott occasioned the family to part with these lands. They now form part of the extensive estates of Bucclengh. Several of the wives of Fauldshope were supposed to be rank witches; and the famous witch of Fauldshope, who so terribly hectored Mr. Michael Scott, by turning him into a hare, and hunting him with his own dogs, until forced to take shelter in his own jaw-hole, was one of the Mrs. Hoggs, better known by the name of Lucky Hogg. The cruel retaliation which he made in showing his art to her, is also well known. It appears also, that some of the Hoggs had been poets before now, as there is still a part of an old song extant, relating much to them. Observe how elegantly it flows on:—

. . . . . .

"And the rough Hoggs of Fauldshope,
That wear baith woo' and hair;
There's nae sic Hoggs as Fauldshope's
In a' St. Boswell's fair."

And afterwards near the end:—

"But the hardy Hoggs of Fauldshope,
For courage, blood, an' bane;
For the Wild Boar of Fauldshope,
Like him was never nane.

"If ye reave the Hoggs of Fauldshope,
Ye herry Harden's gear;
But the poor Hoggs of Fauldshope,
Have had a stormy year."

The Brydens, too, have long been a numerous and respectable clan in Ettrick Forest and its vicinity.

But Juden, as cunning as Harden was strang,
On ilka man's bonnet has placed a white feather;
An' the night being dark, to the Peel height they thrang,
An' closely they darnit them amang the deep heather,

Where the brae it was steep, an' the kye they did wend,
'An sair for their pastures forsaken they strave;
Till Willie o' Fauldshope, wi' half o' the men,
Gade aff wi' a few to encourage the lave.

Nae sooner was Willie gane over the height,
Than up start the Murrays, an' fiercely set on;
An' sic a het fight, i' the howe o' the night,
In the forest of Ettrick has never been known.

Soon weapons were clashing, an' fire was flashing,
An' red ran the bluid down the Ashiesteel brae:
The parties were shouting, the kye they were rowting,
An' rattling an' galloping aff frae the fray.

But tho' weapons were clashing, an' the fire it was flashing,
Tho' the wounded an' dying did dismally groan,
Tho' parties were shouting, the kye they came rowting,
An' Willie o' Fauldshope drave heedlessly on.

O Willie o' Fauldshope, how sad the disaster!
Had some kindly spirit but whispered your ear:
"O Willie, return, an' relieve your kind master,
Wha's fighting surrounded wi' mony a spear."

Surrounded he was; but his brave little band,
Determined, unmoved as the mountain, they stood:
In hopes that their hero was coming to hand,
Their master they guarded in streams of their blood.

In vain was their valour, in vain was their skill,
In vain has young Harden a multitude slain;
By numbers o'erpowered, they were slaughtered at will,
An' Willie o' Harden was prisoner ta'en.

His hands an' his feet they hae bound like a sheep,
An' away to the Elibank tower they did hie;
An' they locked him down in a dungeon sae deep,
An' they bade him prepare on the morrow to die.

Though Andrew o' Langhope had fa'n i' the fight,
He only lay still till the battle was by,
Then ventured to rise, an' climb over the height,
An' there he set up a lamentable cry.

"Ho! Willie o' Fauldshope! Ho! are you distracted?
Ho! what's to come o' you? or where are you gane?
Your friends they are slaughtered, your honour suspected,
An' Willie o' Harden is prisoner ta'en!"

Nae boar in the forest, when hunted an' wounded,
Nae lion or tiger bereaved of his prey,
Did ever sae storm, or was ever sae stounded,
As Willie, when warned o' that ruinous fray.

He threw off his jacket, wi' harness well lined;
He threw off his bonnet well belted wi' steel;
An' off he has run, wi' his troopers behind,
To rescue the lad that they likit sae weel.

But when they arrived on the Elibank green,
The yett it was shut, an' the east it grew pale:
They slinkit away wi' the tears i' their e'en,
To tell to auld Harden their sorrowfu' tale.

Though Harden was grieved, he durst venture nae further,
But left his poor son to submit to his fate.
"If I lose him," quo' he, "I may chance get another,
But never again wad get sic an' estate."

Some say that a stock was begun on that night,
But I canna tell whether 'tis true or a lie;
That muckle Jock Henderson, time o' the fight,
Made off wi' a dozen of Elibank kye.

Brave Robin o' Singlee was cloven through the brain,
An' Kirkhope was woundit, an' young Baillelee.
Wi' Juden, baith Gatehope an' Plora were slain,
An' auld Ashiesteel gat a cut on the knee.

An' mony a brave fellow cut off in their bloom,
Lie rotting in cairns on the bank o' the Steele:
Weep o'er them, ye shepherds! how hapless their doom!
Their natures how faithful, undaunted, an' leel!

The lady o' Elibank raise wi' the dawn,
An' she wakened auld Juden, an' to him did say,—
"Pray, what will ye do wi' this gallant young man?"
"We'll hang him," quo' Juden, "this very same day."

"Wad ye hang sic a brisk an' a gallant young heir,
An' has three hamely daughters aye suffering neglect?[1]
Though laird o' the best o' the Forest sae fair,
He'll marry the warst for the sake o' his neck.

"Despise not the lad for a perilous feat;
"He's a friend will bestead you, an' stand by you still;
The laird maun hae men, an' the men maun hae meat,
An' the meat maun be had, be the danger what will."

[1] This is another traditional mistake, but I cannot think to alter the ballad from its "rough, rude, rugged homeliness." Sir Gideon, however, had only one daughter, whose name was Agnes; but as there is no doubt as to the lineaments of her face, and the dimensions of her mouth, she must continue to be "Muckle mou'd Meg o' the Elibank" still.

Then owre his left knee Juden laid his huge leg,
An' he mused an' he thought that his lady was right.
"By heaven," said he, "he shall marry my Meg;
I dreamed, an' I dreamed o' her a' the last night."

Now Meg was but thin, an' her nose it was lang,
An' her mou' it was muckle as ane could weel be;
Her een they were gray, an' her colour was wan;
But her nature was generous, gentle, an' free.

Her shape it was slender, her manners refined,
Her shoulders were clad wi' her lang dusky hair,
An' three times mae beauties adorned her mind,
Than' mony a ane's that was three times as fair.

Poor Will wi' a guard was brought into a ha',
Ae end hung wi' black, an' the ither full fair;
There Juden's three daughters sat in a raw,
An' himsel' at the head in a twa-elbow chair.

"Now, Will, as ye're young, an' I hope ye may mend,
On the following conditions I grant ye your life:—
That ye be mair wary, an' auld Juden's friend,
An' accept o' my daughter there Meg for your wife.

"An' since ye're sae set on my Elibank kye,
Ye's hae each o' your drove ye can ken by the head;
An' if nae horned acquaintance should kythe to your eye,
Ye shall wale half a score, an' a bull for a breed.

"My Meg, I assure you, is better than bonnie;
I rede you, in choicing let prudence decide;
Then say which ye will; ye are welcome to ony;
See, there is your coffin, or there is your bride."

"Lead on to the gallows, then," Willie replied;
"I'm now in your power, an' ye carry it high;
Nae daughter o' yours shall ere lie by my side;
A Scott, ye maun mind, counts it naething to die."

"Amen! then," quo' Juden, "your raid you shall rue,
Gae lead out the reaver loun straight to his deide;
My Meg, let me tell him 's the best o' the two:
An' bring him the bedesman, for great is his need."

When Will saw the tether drawn over the tree,
His courage misgae him, his heart it grew sair;
He watched Juden's face an' he watched his ee,
But the devil a scrap of reluctance was there.

He fand the last gleam of his hope was a fadin';
The green braes o' Harden nae mair he wad see.
The coffin was there, which he soon must be laid in;
His proud heart was humbled,—he fell on his knee:

"O sir, but ye're hurried—I humbly implore ye,
To grant me three days to examine my mind;
To think on my sins, an' the prospect before me,
An' balance your offer of freedom sae kind."

"My friendship ye spurned; my daughter ye scorned;
Forthwith in the air ye shall flaff at the spauld:
A preciouser villain my tree ne'er adorned;
Hang a rogue when he's young, he'll steal nane when he's auld.

"Then here is my daughter's hand, there is the rood,
This moment take the one or the other the nicst;
'Tis all for your country an' countrymen's good—
See, there is the hangman, or here is the priest."

But Willie now fand he was fairly i' the wrang,
That marriage an' death were twa different things.—
"What matter," quo' he, "though her nose it be lang?
For noses bring luck, an' it's welcome that brings.

"There's something weel-faurd in her soncy gray een,
But they're better than nane, an ane's life is sae sweet;
An', what though her mou' be the maist I hae seen?
Faith, muckle-mou'd fock hae a luck for their meat."

That day they were wedded, that night they were bedded,
An' Juden has feasted them gaily an' free;
But aft the bridegroom has he rallied an' bladded,
What faces he made at the big hanging tree.

He swore that his mou' was grown wider than Meg's;
That his face frae the chin was a half a yard high;
That it struck wi' a palsy his knees an' his legs;
For a' that *a Scott thought it naething to die!*

"There's naething," quo' Juden, "that I mair approve,
Than a rich forest laird to come stealin' my kye;
Wad Branxholm an' Thirlstane come for a drove,
I wad furnish them wives in their bosoms to lie."

So Willie took Meg to the forest sae fair,[1]
An' they lived a most happy an' social life;
The langer he kend her, he lo'ed her the mair,
For a prudent, a virtuous, and honourable wife.

An' muckle guid bluid frae that union has flowed,
An' mony a brave fellow, an' mony a brave feat;
I darena just say they are a' muckle mou'd,
But they rather have still a guid luck for their meat.

[1] Though Elibank is in the shire of Selkirk, as well as Oakwood, yet, originally, by Ettrick Forest was meant only the banks and environs of the two rivers Ettrick and Yarrow.

Mess John.

This is a very popular story about Ettrick Forest, as well as a part of Annandale and Tweeddale, and is always told with the least variation, both by young and old, of any legendary tale I ever heard. It seems, like many others, to be partly founded on facts, with a great deal of romance added; for, if tradition can be in aught believed, the murder of the priest seems well attested; but I do not know if any records mention it. His surname is said to have been Binram, though some suppose that it was only a nickname: and the mount under which he was buried still retains the name of Binram's Corse. A gentleman of this country, with whom I lately conversed, strove to convince me that I had placed the era of the tale too late, for that it must have had its origin from a much earlier age. But when was there ever a more romantic or more visionary age, than that to which this ballad refers? Besides, it is certain, that the two heroes, Dobson and Dun, whom every one allows to have been the first who had the courage to lay hold of the lady, and to have slain the priest, skulked about the head of Moffat water during the heat of the persecution, which they both survived. And Andrew Moore, who died at Ettrick about twenty-six years ago, at a great age, often averred, that he had, in his youth, seen and conversed with many people who remembered every circumstance of it, both as to the murder of the priest, and the road being laid waste by the woman running at night with a fire-pan, or, as some call it, a globe of fire on her head. This singular old man could repeat by heart every old ballad which is now published in the "Minstrelsy of the Border," except three, with three times as many; and from him, "Auld Maitland," with many ancient songs and tales, still popular in that country, are derived.

If I may then venture a conjecture at the whole of this story, it is nowise improbable, that the lass of Craigieburn was some enthusiast in religious matters, or perhaps a lunatic; and that, being troubled with a sense of guilt, and a squeamish conscience, she had, on that account, made several visits to St. Mary's Chapel to obtain absolution; and it is well known that many of the mountain-men wanted only a hair to make a tether of. Might they not then frame this whole story about the sorcery, on purpose to justify their violent procedure in the eyes of their countrymen, as no bait was more likely to be swallowed at that time? But however it was, the reader has the story, in the following ballad, much as I have it. The mound which bears the priest's name was raised last year by two gentlemen from Edinburgh, and a small chest full of ashes, and one or two human teeth, were found, which proves the antiquity of the Cairn of Binram's Cross, whoever may have been buried under it.

Mess John stood in St. Mary's Kirk,[1]
And preached and prayed so mightilye;
No monk nor abbot in the land,
Could preach or pray so well as he.

The words of peace flowed from his tongue,
His heart seemed wrapt with heavenly flame,
And thousands would the chapel throng,
So distant flew his pious fame.

His face was like the rising moon,
Imblushed with evening's purple dye;
His stature like the graceful pine,
That grew on Bowerhope hills so high.[2]

Mess John lay on his lonely couch,
And oft he sighed and sorely pined;
A smothered flame consumed his heart,
And tainted his capacious mind.

It was not for the nation's sin,
Nor Kirk oppressed that he did mourn;
'Twas for a little earthly flower—
The bonny lass of Craigieburn.

Whene'er his eyes with her's did meet,
They pierced his heart without remede;
And when he heard her voice so sweet,
Mess John forgot to say his creed.

"Curse on our foolish law," he said,
"That chains us back from social joy;
The sweetest bliss to mortals lent,
I cannot taste without alloy!

"Give misers wealth, and monarchs power;
Give heroes kingdoms to o'erturn;
Give sophists latent depths to scan—
Give me the lass of Craigieburn."

O passion, what can thee surpass!
Mess John's religious zeal is flown;
A priest in love is like the grass,
That fades ere it be fairly grown.

When thinking on her liquid eye,
Her maiden form so fair and gay,
Her limbs, the polished ivorye,
His heart, like wax, would melt away!

He tried the hom'lies to rehearse,
He tried it both by night and day;
But all his lair and logic failed,
His thoughts were on the bonny May.

He said the creed, he sung the mass,
And o'er the breviary did turn;
But still his wayward fancy eyed
The bonnie lass of Craigieburn.

One day upon his lonely couch
He lay, a prey to passion fell;
And aft he turned—and aft he wished
What bedesman's tongue durst hardly tell.

A sudden languor chilled his blood,
And quick o'er all his senses flew;
But what it was, or what the cause,
He neither wished to know nor knew:

He weened he heard the thunder roll,
And then a laugh of malice keen;
Fierce whirlwinds shook the mansion-walls,
And grievous sobs were heard between:

[1] The ruins of St. Mary's Chapel are still visible, in a wild scene on the banks of the lake of that name; but the mansion in which the monk, or, as some call him, the curate, lived, was almost erased of late for the purpose of building a stone-wall round the old church and burying ground. This chapel is, in some ancient records, called *The Maiden Kirk*, and in others, *The Kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes*.

[2] The hills of Bowerhope, on the south side of the loch, opposite to the chapel, rise to the height of two thousand feet above the sea's level, and were formerly covered with wood.

And then a maid of beauty bright,
With blushing cheek, and claithing thin,
And many a fascinating air,
To his bedside came gliding in.

A silken mantle on her feet
Fell down in many a fold and turn:[1]
Too well he knew the lovely form
Of bonny May of Craigieburn!

Though eye, and tongue, and every limb
Lay moveless as the mountain rock,
Yet fast his fluttering pulses played,
As thus the enticing demon spoke:—

"Poor heartless man! and wilt thou lie
A prey to this devouring flame?
That this fair form is not thine own,
None but thyself hast thou to blame.

"Thou little know'st the fervid fires
In female breasts that burn so clear!
The forward youth of fierce desires
To us is most supremely dear.

"Who ventures most to gain our charms,
By us is ever most approved;
The ardent kiss and clasping arms
By maid is ever best beloved.[2]

"Then mould this form of fairest wax,
With adder's eyes, and feet of horn;
Place this small scroll within its breast,
Which I from love have hither borne;

"And make a blaze of alder wood:
Before your fire make that to stand;
And the last night of every moon
Your bonny May's at your command.

"With fire and steel to urge her weel,
See that you neither stint nor spare;[3]
For if the cock be heard to crow,
The charm will vanish into air."

Then bristly, bristly, grew her hair,
Her colour changed to black and blue;
And broader, broader, grew her face,
Till with a yell away she flew!

The charm was gone,—upstarts Mess John;
A statue now behold him stand!
Fain, fain he would suppose't a dream—
But lo! the scroll is in his hand.

Read through this tale, and as you pass,
You'll cry, "alas, the priest's a man!
And man's a worm, and flesh is grass,
And stand himself he never can."

Within the chaplain's sinful cell
Is done a deed without a name;
The lovely moulded image stands
A-melting at the alder flame.

The charm of wickedness prevails,
The eye of Heaven is shut for sin;
The maid of Craigieburn is seized
With burning of the soul within.

"O father dear! what ails my heart?
Ev'n but this minute I was well;
And now, though still in health and strength,
I suffer half the pains of hell."

"My bonny May, my darling child!
Ill wots thy father what to say;
I fear 'tis for some secret sin
That Heaven this scourge on thee doth lay.

"Confess, and to thy Maker pray;
He's kind; be firm, and banish fear:
He'll lay no more on my poor child
Than he gives strength of mind to bear."

"A thousand poignards pierce my heart!
I feel, I feel, I must away;
Yon holy man at Mary's Kirk
Will pardon, and my pains allay.

"I mind when on a doleful night,
A picture of this black despair
Was fully open to my sight.
A vision bade me hasten there."

"O stay, my child, till morning dawn,
The night is dark and danger nigh;
The hill-men in their wildered haunts
Will shoot thee for a nightly spy.

[1] It is a vulgarly received opinion, that let the devil assume what appearance he will, were it even that of an angel of light, yet still his feet must be cloven; and that if he do not contrive some means to cover them, they will lead to a discovery of him and his intentions, which are only evil, and that continually. It is somewhat curious, that they should rank him among the clean beasts, which divide the hoof. They believe, likewise, that he and his emissaries can turn themselves into any shape they please, of all God's creatures, excepting those of a lion, a lamb, and a dove. Consequently their situation is the most perilous that can be conceived; for, when it begins to grow dark, they cannot be sure, but that almost all the beasts and birds they see are either deils or witches. Of cats, hares, and swine, they are particularly jealous; and a caterwauling noise hath often turned men from going to see their sweethearts, and even from seeking the midwife. And I knew a girl, who returned home after proceeding ten miles on a journey, from the unlucky and ominous circumstance of an ugly bird crossing the road three times before her: neither did her parents at all disapprove of what she had done.

[2] If any of my fair readers should quarrel with the sentiments manifested in these two stanzas, they will recollect that they are the sentiments of a fiend, who, we must suppose, was their mortal enemy, and would not scruple to paint their refined sensibility in very false colours, or at least from a very wrong point of view.

[3] The story says, that the priest was obliged to watch the picture very constantly; and that always when the parts next the fire began to soften, he stuck pins into them, and exposed another side; that, when each of these pins were stuck in, the lady uttered a piercing shriek; and that, as their number increased in the waxen image, her torment increased, and caused her to haste on with amazing speed.

"'Mong wild Polmoody's mountains green,
Full many a wight their vigils keep;[1]
Where roars the torrent from Loch Skene,
A troop is lodged in trenches deep.[2]

"The howling fox and raving earn
Will scare thy reason quite away;
Regard thy sex and tender youth,
And stay my child till dawning day."

But burning, raging, wild with pain,
By moorland cleuch and dark defile,
Away with many a shriek she ran
Straight forward for St. Mary's aisle.

And lo! a magic lanthorn bright
Hung on the birks of Craigieburn;
She placed the wonder on her head,
Which shone around her like the sun.

She ran, impelled by racking pain,
Through rugged ways and waters wild;
Where art thou, guardian spirit, fled?
O haste to save an only child!

Hold!—he who dotes on earthly things,
'Tis fit his frailty should appear;
Hold!—they who Providence accuse,
'Tis just their folly cost them dear.

The God who guides the gilded moon,
And rules the rough and rolling sea,
Without a trial ne'er will leave
A soul to evil destiny.

When crossing Meggat's Highland strand,
She stopt to hear an eldritch scream;
Loud crowed the cock at Henderland,
The charm evanished like a dream!

The magic lanthorn left her head,
And, darkling, now return she must.
She wept, and cursed her hapless doom;
She wept—and called her God unjust.

But on that sad revolving day,
The racking pains again return;
And wanders on her nightly way,
The bonny lass of Craigieburn.

And back unto her father's hall,
Weeping she journeys, ruined quite;
And still on that returning day,
Yields to a monster's hellish might.

But o'er the scene we'll draw a veil,
Wet with the tender tear of woe;
For we must to our magic tale,
And all the shepherd's terrors show.

Once every month the spectre ran,
With shrieks would any heart appal;
And every maid, and every man,
Astonished fled at evening fall.

A bonny widow went at night
To meet the lad she loved so well;
"Ah! yon's my former husband's sprite!"
She cried, and into faintings fell.

[1] The mountains of Polmoody, besides being the highest, are the most inaccessible in the south of Scotland; and great numbers from the western counties found shelter on them during the heat of the persecution. Many of these, it is supposed, were obliged to shift for their sustenance by stealing sheep; yet the country people, from a sense that *necessity has no law*, winked at the loss; their sheep being, in those days, of less value than their meal, of which they would otherwise have been obliged to part with a share to the sufferers. Part of an old ballad is still current in that neighbourhood, which relates their adventures, and the difficulties they laboured under for want of meat, and in getting hold of the sheep during the night. Some of the country people, indeed, ascribe these depredations to the persecutors; but it is not likely that they would put themselves to so much trouble. I remember only a few stanzas of this ballad, which are as follow:

. . . . . .

"Carrifran Gans they're very strait,
We canna gang without a road:
But tak ye the tae side, an' me the tither,
An' they'll a' come in at Firthup dod.

. . . . . .

"On Turnberry, an' Carrifran Gans,
An' out amang the Moodlaw haggs,
They worried the feck o' the laird's lambs,
An' eatit them raw, an' buried the baggs.

. . . . . .

"Had Gueinshope Castle a tongue to speak,
Or mouth o' flesh that it could fathom,
It wad tell o' mony a supple trick,
Was done at the foot o' Rotten-Boddom:

Where Donald and his hungry men,
Oft houghed them up wi' little din,
An', mair intent on flesh than yarn,
Bure aff the bouk, an' buried the skin."

This Gueinshope is an extensive wild glen on the further side of these mountains; and, being in former times used as a common, to which many of the gentlemen and farmers of Tweeddale drove their flocks to feed during the summer months, consequently, it would be at that season a very fit place for a prey. The Donald mentioned may have been the famous Donald Cargill, a Cameronian preacher of great notoriety at the period.

[2] There are sundry cataracts in Scotland, which bear the name of *The Gray Mare's Tail:* in particular one in the parish of Closeburn, in Nithsdale; and one betwixt Stranraer and Newton Stewart; but that of Polmoody, on the border of Annandale, surpasses them all; as the water, with only one small intermission, falls from a height of 300 yards. This, with the rocks overhanging it on each side, when the water is flooded, greatly excels anything I ever saw in awful grandeur. Immediately below it, in the straitest part of that narrow pass, which leads from Annandale into Yarrow, a small strong entrenchment is visible. It is called by the country people *The Giant's Trench.* It is of the form of a crescent, and is defended behind by a bank. As it is not nearly so much grown up as those at Philiphaugh, it is probable that a handful of the Covenanters might fortify themselves there, during the time that their brethren were in arms. But it is even more probable, that a party of the king's troops might be posted for some time in that important pass; as it is certain that Claverhouse made two sweeping circuits of that country, and, the last time, took many prisoners in the immediate vicinity of this situation. May we not likewise suppose, that the outrage committed at Saint Mary's Kirk, might contribute to his appearance in those parts?

An honest tailor leaving work,
  Met with the lass of Craigieburn;
It was enough—he breathed his last
  One shriek had done the tailor's turn.

A mountain-preacher quat his horse,
  And prayed aloud with lengthened phiz:
The damsel yelled—the father kneeled—
  Dundee was but a joke to this!

Young Laidlaw of the Chapelhope,
  Enraged to see the road laid waste,
Waylaid the damsel with a gun,[1]
  But in a panic home was chased.

But drunken John of Keppel-Gill,
  Met with her on Carrifran Gans;
He staggering cried, "Who devil's that?"
  Then plashing on, cried, "Faith, God kens!"

The Cameronians left their camp,
  And scattered wide o'er many a hill;
Pursued by men, pursued by hell,
  They stoutly held their tenets still.

But at the source of Moffat's stream,
  Two champion's of the cov'nant dwell,
Who long had braved the power of men,
  And fairly beat the prince of hell:[2]

Armed with a gun, a rowan-tree rung,
  A Bible, and a scarlet twine,
They placed them on the Birkhill path,
  And saw afar the lanthorn shine.

And nearer, nearer, still it drew,
  At length they heard her piercing cries;
And louder, louder, still they prayed,
  With aching heart, and upcast eyes!

The Bible, spread upon the brae,
  No sooner did the light illume,
Than straight the magic lanthorn fled,
  And left the lady in the gloom.

[1] The Laidlaws of the Chapelhope either favoured or pitied the Covenanters, for they fed and sheltered great numbers of them, even to the impairing of their fortunes. On Dundee's first approach to these parts, Mrs. Laidlaw went out to the road, and invited him and all his men to partake of a liberal refreshment, which they thankfully accepted; and this being a principal family, he went away so thoroughly convinced of the attachment of that neighbourhood to the royal cause, that a scrutiny was not only at that time effectually prevented, but the troops returned no more thither for many years, until the license which was there enjoyed gathered such numbers that it became quite notorious. The spots where conventicles were held on these grounds, are still well known, and pointed out by some devout shepherds, with anecdotes of the preachers or some of the leading characters that frequented them. One can scarcely believe, but that Mr. Graham had visited these spots, or had been present on them, when he wrote the following lines:—

"O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas. Fast by such brooks,
A little glen is sometimes scooped; a plat
With green-sward gay, and flowers, that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye."—

These lines, with the two following pages of the sweet poem in which they occur, seem to be literal sketches of these scenes, as well as a representation of the transactions which then took place. For years more gloomy followed; and from these "green-swards gay," they were driven into the "deep dells, by rocks o'ercanopied." Thus it was high up in Ryskinhope where Renwick preached his last sermon, above the lakes, the sources of the Yarrow, where there is neither plat nor plain, but linns and moors. When he prayed that day, few of the hearers' cheeks were dry. My parents were well acquainted with a woman whom he there baptized.

[2] These men's names were Halbert Dobson and David Dun; better known by those of Hab Dob and Davie Din. The remains of their cottage are still visible, and sure never was human habitation contrived on such a spot. It is on the very brink of a precipice, which is 400 feet of perpendicular height, whilst another of half that height overhangs it above. To this they resorted in times of danger for a number of years; and the precipice is still called *Dob's Linn*.

There is likewise a natural cavern in the bottom of the linn farther up, where they, with other ten, hid themselves for several days, while another kept watch upon the Path-knowe; and they all assembled at the cottage during the night.

Tradition relates further of these two champions, that, while they resided at the cottage by themselves, the devil appeared to them every night, and plagued them exceedingly; striving often to terrify them, so as to make them throw themselves over the linn. But one day they contrived a hank of red yarn in the form of crosses, which it was impossible the devil could pass: and, on his appearance at night, they got in behind him, and attacked him resolutely with each a Bible in one hand, and a rowan-tree staff in the other, and after a desperate encounter, they succeeded in tumbling him headlong over the linn; but to prevent hurting himself, at the moment he was overcome, he turned himself into a batch of skins! It was not those of stolen sheep, we hope. Credulity has been at this time very prevalent among the Scots, else such a story never could have obtained the least credit; yet, it is said, these men were wont to tell it as long as they lived, concluding it always with the observation, that the devil had never more troubled them, as he found it was not for his health.

A short rhyme is still extant relating to this singular tradition; but which seems to have been composed afterwards, as the linn is there called Dob's Linn. It seems not improbable, that the bard who composed the song above quoted was likewise the author of this; for, like it, it is hard to say whether it is serious or burlesque.

"Little kend the wirrikow,
What the covenant would dow!
What o' faith, an' what o' fen,
What o' might, an' what o' men;
Or he had never shown his face,
His reekit rags, and riven taes,*
To men o' mak, an' men o' mense,
Men o' grace, and men o' sense:
For Hab Dob, an' Davie Din,
Dang the deil owre Dob's Linn.

'Weir,' quo' he, an' 'weir,' quo' he,
'Haud the Bible till his ee;
Ding him owre, or thrash him down,
He's a fause deceitfu' loun!'—
Then he owre him, an' he owre him,
He owre him, an' he owre him:
Habby held him griff an' grim,
Davie thrensh him liff an' limb;
Till like a bunch o' barkit skins,
Down flew Satan owre the linns."—

After seeing this, the reader will not deny, that our champions "fairly beat the prince of hell.". See the *Brownie of Bodsbeck*.

* The "reekit duds, and reistit phiz," which Burns attributes to the grand enemy of mankind, is perhaps borrowed from this popular rhyme.

With open book, and haggart look,
"Say what art thou?" they loudly cry;
"I am a woman, let me pass,
Or quickly at your feet I'll die.

"O let me run to Mary's Kirk,
Where, if I'm forced to sin and shame,
A gracious God will pardon me,—
My heart was never yet to blame."

Armed with the gun, the rowan-tree rung,
The Bible, and the scarlet twine,
With her they trudged to Mary's Kirk
To execute the will divine.

When nigh St. Mary's aisle they drew,
Rough winds, and rapid rains began;
The livid lightning linked flew,
And round the rattling thunder ran.

The torrents rush, the mountains quake,
The sheeted ghosts run to and fro;
And deep and long, from out the lake,
The water-cow was heard to low.[1]

The mansion then seemed in a blaze,
And issued forth a sulphurous smell;
An eldritch laugh went o'er their heads,
Which ended in a hellish yell.

Bauld Halbert ventured to the cell,
And, from a little window, viewed
The priest and Satan close engaged
In hellish rites and orgies lewd.

A female form, of melting wax,
Mess John surveyed with steady eye,
Which ever and anon he pierced,
Forcing the lady loud to cry.[2]

Then Halbert raised his trusty gun,
Was loaded well with powder and ball,
And, aiming at the chaplain's head,
He blew his brains against the wall.

The devil flew with such a clap,
On door nor window did not stay;
And loud he cried, in jeering tone,
"Ha, ha, ha, ha, poor John's away!"

East from the kirk and holy ground,
They bare that lump of sinful clay,
And o'er him raised a mighty mound,
Called Binram's Corse unto this day.

An' ay when any lonely wight,
By yon dark cleugh is forced to stray,
He hears that cry at dead of night,
"Ha, ha, ha, ha, poor John's away!"

The Death of Douglas,

LORD OF LIDDISDALE.[3]

The first stanza of this song, as well as the history of the event to which it refers, is preserved by Hume of Godscroft, in his history of the house of Douglas. The author, having been successful in rescuing some excellent old songs from the very brink of oblivion, searched incessantly many years after the remains of this, until lately, by mere accident, he lighted upon a few scraps, which he firmly believes to have formed a part of that very ancient ballad. The reader may judge for himself. The first verse is from Hume, and many other single lines and couplets that are ancient occur, which are barely sufficient to distinguish the strain in which the old song hath proceeded.

The Ladye Douglas lefte hir bouir,
And aye sae loud as scho did call,
"'Tis all for guid Lord Liddisdale
Thatte I do lette these tearis downe fall."

[1] In some places of the Highlands of Scotland, the inhabitants are still in continual terror of an imaginary being, called the *water-horse*. When I was travelling over the extensive and dreary isle of Lewis, I had a lad of Stornoway with me as a guide and interpreter. On leaving the shores of Loch Rogg, in our way to Harris, we came to an inland lake, called, I think, Loch Alladale; and though our nearest road lay alongst the shores of this loch, Malcolm absolutely refused to accompany me that way for fear of the *water-horse*, of which he told many wonderful stories, swearing to the truth of them; and, in particular, how his father had lately been very nigh taken by him, and that he had succeeded in decoying one man to his destruction, a short time previous to that. This spectre is likewise an inhabitant of Loch Aven, at the foot of Cairngorm, and of Loch Laggan, in the wilds betwixt Lochaber and Badenoch. Somewhat of a similar nature seems to have been the *water cow*, which in former times haunted St. Mary's Loch, of which some extremely fabulous stories are yet related; and though rather less terrible and malevolent than the water-horse, yet, like him, she possessed the rare slight of turning herself into whatever shape she pleased, and was likewise desirous of getting as many dragged into the lake as possible. Andrew Moore, above mentioned, said, that when he was a boy, his parents would not suffer him to go to play near the loch for fear of her; and that he remembered of seeing her once coming swimming towards him and his comrades in the evening twilight, but they all fled, and she sunk before reaching the side. A farmer of Bowerhope once got a breed of her, which he kept for many years, until they multiplied exceedingly; and he never had any cattle throve so well, until once, on some disrespect on the farmer's part toward them, the old dam came out of the lake one pleasant March evening, and gave such a roar, that all the surrounding hills shook again; upon which her progeny, nineteen in number, followed her all quietly into the loch, and were never more seen.

[2] After the subject of a ballad is fairly introduced, great particularity is disgusting; therefore, the lass of Craigieburn, after this line, is no more mentioned. But the story adds that she died of a broken heart, and of the heats which she got in being forced to run so fast. Another tradition, which I heard more lately, says, that she was conveyed secretly to a nunnery in Ireland, and that her father, whose name was Nicolson, afterward lived in Craigbeck.

[3] So far hath the old ballad led me to whatever it may allude. If it was indeed the Lady Douglas, the following is a sketch of her history. She was the only daughter of Donald, the twelfth Earl of Mar, and was married, when young, to John Earl of Monteith, and shortly after to William, the first Earl of Douglas. But the fourth year afterwards, Douglas growing jealous of her and his kinsmen, William Lord of Liddisdale, waylaid the latter as he was hunting in William-hope, above Yair, and slew him treacherously; mastering him, as

"O hald your tongue, my sister deare,
And of your weepynge lette mee be:
Lord Liddisdale will hald hys owne
With ony lord of Chrystendye.

"Forre him yee wadna weipe or pyne,
Yffe yee hadde seene, whatte I did see,
Thatte daye hee broke the troops of Tyne,
With gylded sword of mettil free.

"Stout Hazelburne wals movit with rage
To see hys faintynge vassalis yielde;
And hande to hande hee did engage
Lord Liddisdale uponne the fielde.

"Avaunte, thou haughtye Scotte," hee cried,
"And homewarde to thy countrye turne;
Say, wilt thou brave the deadlye brande,
And heavvye hande of Hazelburne?

"The word hadde scarcely mixt with ayre,
When Douglas' sworde sharpe answer gae;
And frae ane wounde baithe deipe and sair
Furth fledde the Southron's soule awaye.

"Madde Faucette next, with woundis transfixt,
In anguish gnawit the bluidye claye;
Then Hallynshedde hee wheilit and fledde,
And lefte hys riche ill-gottyn prey.

"I hae beene easte, I hae beene weste,
I hae seene dangyrs manie a ane;
But for ane baulde and dauntlesse breiste,
Lord Liddisdale will yielde to nane.

"And were I called to face the fae,
And bidden chuse my leader free,
Lord Liddisdale should be the man
To lead me onne to victorye."

"O hald your tongue, my brother Johnne!
Though I haif heard you patientlye,
Lord Liddisdale is deide and gonne,
And he wals slainn forre lofe of mee.

"My littyl trew and trustye page
Has brocht the heavvye newis to mee,
Thatte my ainne lord diddye hym engage,
Where he coulde nouther fighte nor fle.

"Four of the foremoste menne hee slew,
And four hee woundit desp'ratelye,
But cruel Douglas came behynde,
And ranne hym through the fayre bodye.

"O wae be to thee, Agel's wodde,
O wae be to thee, Willaimis lee;
O wae be to the dastarde croud
That murderit the flouir of chivalrye!

"It walsna rage forre Ramseye slainn,
Thatte raisit the deadlie feid sae hie;
Nor perjured Berkeley's tymelesse death—
It wals for kyndnesse shown to mee.

"When I wals ledde through Liddisdale,
And thirty horsemen guardynge mee;
When thatte gude lord came to my ayde,
Sae soon as he did sette mee free.

"The wylde burdis sang, the woodlandis rang,
And sweit the sunne shonne onne the vale;
Then thynkna ye, my heart wals wae
To parte with gentle Liddisdale?

"But I will greit forre Liddisdale,
Untyl my twa black eyne rinne dry;
And I will wayl forre Liddisdale,
Als lang als I hae voyce to cry.

"And for that guid lord I will sigh,
Untyl my heart and spirit fayl;
And when I die, O bury mee,
Onne the lefte syde of Liddisdale."

"Now hald your tongue, my syster deare,
Your grief will cause baithe dule and shame;
Synce ye were fause in sic ane cause,
The Douglas' rage I canna blame."

"Gae stemm the bytter norlan gale;
Gae bid the wylde wave cease to rowe;
I'll owne my lofe for Liddisdale,
Afore the kyng, my lorde and you."

He drew hys sword of nutte-browne steele,
While neid-fyre kyndlit in hys ee,
"Renounce thy lofe, dishoneste dame,
Or thy proud kyn avengit shalle bee!"

Scho threw hyr lockis back frae hyr cheike,
And she frownit and leuch loud laughteris three;
"When thou and my lord gies me law,
There'll be nae mae botte hym and thee."

"Suche als thy pryde so bee thy meed;
The deide hadde never beene donne by mee.
But the Douglas' name it brookis no shame,"—
And hee ranne hyr through the fayre bodye.

Scho dypt her fynger in hyr heartis bleide,
It wals ane brichte and ane scarlett dye;
And scho lookit wyldlye in hys face,
And scho lookit wyldlye to the sky.

"O thou haste donne ane manlye deide,
In bluidye letteris itt muste stande:
But I'll sett my mark onne thy forheid,
And I'll put my mark onne thy rychte hande:

was supposed, by numbers; for William of Liddisdale was so brave and so gallant a man, that he was styled "The Flower of Chivalry." Earl Douglas pretended to his followers, that this assassination was in revenge for the deaths of Ramsey of Dalhousie, and Sir David Berkeley, both of whom the knight of Liddisdale had cruelly slain; but it appears, both from the ballad, and the hints thrown out by Godscroft, that it was through jealousy of Liddisdale and his lady.

"And I'll give thee the curse of chyldlysnesse,
And I mark it onne thy ruthlys brow;
And envy and pryde thy hande shalle guide,
Untyl thou be als I am now.

"And I telle it thee before the sunne,
And God shalle wytnesse yffe I lie,
The streime of thy lyfe is neirly runne,
My name shalle live, but thyne shalle die."

"Chryste sende thee succour, my faire syster,
And trew may thy wordis of bodyng bee;
Yffe there is ane leeche in Scotlande can,
Hee shall cure thy woundis rychte snddenlye.

"Forre yffe thou die'st, my syster deire,
My daies of peice onne earthe are donne;
I shalle never taste of comforte here,
But weipe and wayl beneathe the sonne.

"And yffe thou die'st, my fayre syster,
I shall seike remissioune in Italie,
And kneile in the holye sepulchre,
Before my bones shalle reste with thee."

But ere seiven lang monthis were come and gane,
Thatte ladyis wordis were provit to stande,
Forre thatte knychte wals rowit in his wyndinge sheit,
But scho wals the fayrest of all the lande.

And mony a lord in lofe did pyne,
Forre hyr eyne the heartis of all men drewe,
And mony a hosbande scho hathe slayne,
And evir and anon gotte newe.[1]

All you who lovethe weirdlye deidis
Beware of ladyis wytchinge harme,
For litand sturte, and stryffe it breidis,
And it slackenis the herte, and slymmis the arme.

Unto ane yonge manne of mettil brychte,
It workethe payne and deidlye skaithe;
But to ane oulde and dotard wychte,
Womyn is worse than helle beneathe.

Willie Wilkin.

The real name of this famous warlock was Johnston: how he came to acquire that of Wilkin I can get no information, though his name and his pranks are well known in Annandale and Nithsdale. He seems to have been an abridgment of Mr. Michael Scott; but though his powers were exhibited on a much narrower scale, they were productive of effects yet more malevolent.

The glow-worm goggled on the moss,
When Wilkin rode away,
And much his aged mother feared,
But wist not what to say:

For near the change of every moon,
At deepest midnight tide,
He hied him to yon ancient fane
That stands on Kinnel side.[2]

His thoughts were absent, wild his looks,
His speeches fierce and few;
But who he met, or what was done,
No mortal ever knew.

"O stay at home, my only son,
O stay at home with me!
I fear I'm secretly forewarned
Of ills awaiting thee.

"Last night I heard the dead-bell sound,
When all were fast asleep;
And aye it rung, and aye it sung,
Till all my flesh did creep.

"And when on slumber's silken couch,
My senses dormant lay,
I saw a pack of hnngry hounds,
Would make of thee their prey.

"With feeble step, I ran to help,
Or death with thee to share;
When straight you bound my hands and feet,
And left me lying there.

[1] This is so far true. The Earl of Douglas was her second husband, and shortly after this business with Liddisdale, he divorced her, although she had then born him a son and a daughter. Shortly after this divorce, she was again, by a third marriage, united to Thomas Douglas, third Earl of Angus, and on his death, by a fourth marriage, to Sir John Swinton; a success in noble conquests that few ladies of our day can boast.

If there be any truth at all in the story of her being wounded by her brother, it must have been by Thomas, the thirteenth Earl of Mar, as he was her only brother. He died childless, and this lady's son James, by the Earl of Douglas, succeeded to his estate and titles. This was the brave James Earl of Douglas and Mar, of whom so much legendary lore prevails, both in song and traditionary tale. He was knighted by his father, along with two of the king's sons, on a field of battle, which was fought on the lands of Abbotsford in the year 1378, and in which old Douglas gained a signal and great success over the English, headed by Sir Thomas Musgrave; and after a life of warlike adventures, was slain at the battle of Otterburn—*alias*, "The Huntyng of the Chevyote."

[2] The name of this ancient fane is Dumgree. It is beautifully situated on the west side of the Kinnel, one of the rivers which joins the Annan from the west; and is now in ruins. It is still frequented by a few peaceable spirits, at certain seasons. As an instance: Not many years ago, a neighbouring farmer, riding home at night upon a mare, who, besides knowing the road well enough, had her foal closed in at home, thought himself hard at his own house, but was surprised to find that his mare was stopped at the door of the old kirk of Dumgree. He mounted again, and essayed it a second and a third time; but always with the same result, and farther from home than when he first set out. He was now sensible that the beast was led by some invisible hand, so alighting, he went into the chapel and said his prayers; after which he mounted, and rode as straight home as if it had been noon. If the farmer had told his story to my uncle Toby, he would certainly have whistled, *Lillabullero*.

"I saw them tear thy vitals forth;
Thy life-blood dyed the way;
I saw thy eyes all glaring red,
And closed mine for aye.

"Then stay at home, my only son,
O stay at home with me!
Or take with thee this little book,
Thy guardian it shall be."

"Hence, old fanatic, from my sight!
What means this senseless whine?
I pray thee, mind thine own affairs,
Let me attend to mine."

"Alas! my son, the generous spark,
That warmed thy tender mind,
Is now extinct, and malice keen
Is only left behind.

"How canst thou rend that aged heart,
That yearns thy woes to share?
Thou still has been my only grief,
My only hope and care.

"Ere I had been one month a bride,
Of joy I took farewell;
With Craigie on the banks of Sark,
Thy valiant father fell.

"I nursed thee on my tender breast,
With meikle care and pain;
And saw with pride thy mind expand,
Without one sordid stain.

"With joy each night I saw thee kneel
Before the throne of grace;
And on thy Saviour's blessed day,
Frequent his holy place.

"But all is gone! the vespers sweet,
Which from our castle rose,
Are silent now; and sullen pride
In hand with envy goes.

"Thy wedded wife has swayed thy heart
To pride and passion fell;
O, for thy little children's sake,
Renounce that path of hell!

"Then stay at home, my only son,
O, with thy mother stay!
Or tell me what thou goest about,
That I for thee may pray."

He turned about, and hasted out,
And for his horse did call:
"An hundred fiends my patience rend,
But thou excell'st them all!"

She slipt beneath his saddle lap
A book of psalms and prayer,
And hastened to yon ancient fane,
To listen what was there.

And when she came to yon kirk-yard,
Where graves are green and low,
She saw full thirty coal-black steeds
All standing in a row.

Her Willie's was the tallest steed,
'Twixt Dee and Annan whole;
But placed beside that mighty rank,
He kythed but like a foal.

She laid her hand upon his side;
Her heart grew cold as stone!
The cold sweat ran from every hair,
He trembled every bone!

She laid her hand upon the next,
His bulky side to stroke;
And aye she reached, and aye she stretched—
'Twas nothing all but smoke.

It was a mere delusive form,
Of films and sulph'ry wind;
And every wave she gave her hand,
A gap was left behind.

She passed through all those stately steeds,
Yet nothing marred her way,
And left her shape in every shade,
For all their proud array.

But whiles she felt a glowing heat,
Though mutt'ring holy prayer;
And filmy veils assail'd her face,
And stifling brimstone air.

Then for her darling desperate grown,
Straight to the aisle she flew;
But what she saw, and what she heard,
No mortal ever knew.

But yells and moans, and heavy groans,
And blackest blasphemye,
Did fast abound; for every hound
Of hell seemed there to be.

And after many a horrid rite,
And sacrifice profane,
"A book! a book!" they loudly howled;
"Our spells are all in vain.

"Hu! tear him, tear him limb from limb!"
Resounded through the pile;
"Hu! tear him, tear him straight, for he
Has mocked us all this while!"

The tender matron, desperate grown,
Then shricked most bitterlye,
"O spare my son, and take my life,
The book was lodged by me."

"Ha! that's my frantic mother's voice!
My life or peace must end;
O! take her, soul and body both!
Take her, and spare thy friend!"

The riot rout then sallied out,
Like hounds upon their prey;
And gathered round her in the aisle,
With many a hellish bray.

Each angry shade endeavours made,
Their fangs in blood to stain,
But all their efforts to be felt,
Were impotent and vain.

Whether the wretched mortal there
His filial hands imbrued,
Or, if the Ruler of the sky
The scene with pity viewed,—

And sent the steaming bolt of heaven,
Ordained to interpose,
To take her life, and save her soul
From these infernal foes,

No man can tell how it befell;
Inquiry all was vain;
But her blood was shed, for the swaird was red
But an' the kirk-door stane;—

And Willie Wilkin's noble steed
Lay stiff upon the green.
A night so dire in Annandale,
Before had never been!

Loud thunders shook the vault of heaven,
The fire-flaughts flew amain;
The graves were ploughed, the rocks were riven,
Whole flocks and herds were slain.

They gathered up the mangled limbs,
And laid beneath the stone;
But the heart, and the tongue, and every palm
From every hand, were gone.

Her blood was sprinkled on the wall,
Her body was on the floor;
Her reverend head, with sorrows gray,
Hung on the chapel door.

To Auchincastle Wilkin hied,
On Evan banks sae green,[1]
And lived and died like other men,
For aught that could be seen;[2]

But gloomy, gloomy was his look,
And froward was his way;
And malice every action ruled,
Until his dying day.

And many a mermaid staid his call,
And many a mettled fay;
And many a wayward spirit learned
His summons to obey.

And many a wondrous work he wrought,
And many things foretold;
Much was he feared, but little loved,
By either young or old.

Thirlestane.[3]

A FRAGMENT.

Fer, fer hee raide, and fer hee gaed,
And aft hee sailit the sea;
And thrise he crossit the Alpyne hyllis
To dystante Italye.

[1] Auchincastle is situated on the west side of the Evan, another of the tributary streams of the Annan. It seems to have been a place of great strength and antiquity; is surrounded by a moat and a fosse; and is perhaps surpassed by none in Scotland for magnitude.

[2] If he lived and died like other men, it appears that he was not at all buried like other men. When on his deathbed, he charged his sons, as they valued their peace and prosperity, to sing no requiem nor say any burial-service over his body; but to put a strong withie to each end of his coffin, by which they were to carry him away to Dumgree, and see that all the attendants were well mounted. On the top of a certain eminence they were to set down the corpse and rest a few minutes, and if nothing interfered, they might proceed. If they fulfilled these, he promised them the greatest happiness and prosperity for four generations; but if they neglected them in one point, the utmost misery and wretchedness. The lads performed everything according to their father's directions; and they had scarcely well set down the corpse on the place he mentioned when they were alarmed by the most horrible bellowing of bulls; and instantly two dreadful brindered ones appeared, roaring and snuffing, and tossing up the earth with their horns and hoofs; on which the whole company turned and fled. When the bulls reached the coffin, they put each of them one of their horns in their respective withies, and ran off with the corpse, stretching their course straight to the westward. The relatives, and such as were well mounted, pursued them, and kept nigh them for several miles; but when they came to the small water of Brann, in Nithsdale, the bulls went straight through the air, from the one hill-head to the other, without descending to the bottom of the glen. This unexpected manœuvre threw the pursuers quite behind, though they needed not to have expected anything else, having before observed that their feet left no traces on the ground, though ever so soft. However, by dint of whip and spur, they again got sight of them; but when they came to Loch Ettrick, on the heights of Closeburn, they had all lost sight of them but two, who were far behind: but the bulls there meeting with another company, plunged into the lake with the corpse, and were never more seen at that time. Ever since his spirit has haunted that loch, and continues to do so to this day.

He was, when alive, very fond of the game of curling on the ice, at which no mortal man could beat him; nor has his passion for it ceased with death; for he and his hellish confederates continue to amuse themselves with this game during the long winter nights, to the great terror and annoyance of the neighbourhood, not much regarding whether the loch be frozen or not. I have heard sundry of the neighbouring inhabitants declare, with the most serious countenances, that they have heard them talking, and the sound of the stones running along the ice and hitting each other, as distinctly as ever they did when present at a real and substantial curling. Some have heard him laughing, others lamenting; and others have seen the two bulls plashing and swimming about in the loch at the close of the evening. In short, every one allows it to be a dangerous place, and a place where very many have been affrighted: though there is little doubt that, making allowances for the magnifying qualities of fear, all the above phenomena might be accounted for in a natural way. Wilkin's descendants are still known; and the poorer sort of them have often their great predecessor mentioned to them as a ground of reproach, whom they themselves allow to have been an *awesome body*.

[3] Sir Robert Scott, knight of Thirlestane, was first married to a lady of high birth and qualifications, whom he most ten-

Beyonde Lough Nesse hys tempil stude,
Ane celle of meikle fame;
A knichte of guid Sainte John hee wals,
And Baldwyn wals hys name.

By wondyrous lore hee coulde explore,
Whatte after tymes wald be;
And manie mystic lynks of fate,
He hafflyns could foresee.

derly loved; but she, soon dying, left him an only son. He was afterwards married to a lady of a different temper, by whom he had several children; whose jealousy of the heir made Sir Robert dote still more on this darling son. She, knowing that the right of inheritance belonged to him, and that, of course, a very small share would fall to her sons, seeing he loved the heir so tenderly, grew every year more uneasy. But the building, and other preparations which were going on at Gamescleuch, on the other side of the Ettrick, for his accommodation on reaching his majority, when he was also to be married to a fair kinswoman, drove her past all patience, and made her resolve on his destruction. The masonry of his new castle of Gamescleuch was finished on his birth-day, when he reached his twentieth year; but it never went farther. This being always a feast-day at Thirlestane, the lady prepared, on that day, to put her hellish plot in execution; for which purpose she had previously secured to her interest John Lally, the family piper. This man, tradition says, procured her three adders, of which they chose the parts replete with the most deadly poison; these they ground to a fine powder, and mixed with a bottle of wine. On the forenoon before the festival commenced, he went over to Gamescleuch to regale his workmen, who had exerted themselves to get their work finished on that day, and Lally the piper went with him as a server. When his young lord called for wine to drink a health to the masons, John gave him a cup of the poisoned bottle, which he drank off. Lally went out of the castle, as if about to return home; but that was the last sight of him. He could never be found nor heard of, though the most diligent and extended search was made for him. The heir swelled and burst almost instantaneously. A large company of the then potent name of Scott, with others, were now assembled at Thirlestane to grace the festival; but what a woeful meeting it turned out to be! They with one voice pronounced him poisoned; but where to attach the blame remained a mystery, as he was so universally loved and esteemed. The first thing the knight caused to be done, was blowing the blast on the trumpet or great bugle, which was the warning for all the family instantly to assemble; which they did in the court of the castle. He then put the following question: "Now, are we all here?" A voice answered from the crowd, "We are all here but Lally the piper." Simple and natural as this answer may seem, it served as an electrical shock to old Sir Robert. It is supposed that, knowing the confidence which his lady placed in this menial, the whole scene of cruelty opened to his eyes at once; and the trying conviction that his peace was destroyed by her most dear to him, struck so forcibly upon his feelings, that it totally deprived him of reason. He stood a long time speechless, and then fell to repeating the answer he had received, like one half awakened out of a sleep; nor was he ever heard, for many a day, to speak another word than these, "We're all here but Lally the piper:" and when any one accosted him, whatever was the subject, that was sure to be the answer he received.

The method which he took to revenge his son's death was singular and unwarrantable. He said that the estate of right belonged to his son, and since he could not bestow it upon him living, he would spend it all upon him now he was dead; and that neither the lady, nor her children, should ever enjoy a farthing of that which she had played so foully for. The body was accordingly embalmed, and lay in great splendour at Thirlestane for a year and a day; during all which time Sir Robert kept open house, welcoming and feasting all who chose to come, and actually spent or mortgaged his whole estate, saving a very small patrimony in Eskdale-muir, which belonged to his wife. Some say, that while all the country, who chose to come, were thus feasting at Thirlestane, she remained shut up in a vault of the castle, and lived on bread and water.

During the three last days of this wonderful feast, the crowds which gathered were immense; it seemed as if the whole country were assembled at Thirlestane. The butts of wine were carried to the open fields, the ends knocked out of them with hatchets, stones, or whatever came readiest to hand, and the liquor carried about, "in stoups and in caups." On these days the burn of Thirlestane ran constantly red with wine, and even communicated its tincture to the river Ettrick. The family vault, where his corpse was interred in a leaden chest, is under the same roof with the present parish church of Ettrick, and distant from Thirlestane about a Scots mile. To give some idea of the magnitude of the burial, the old people tell us, that though the whole way was crowded with attendants, yet when the leaders of the procession reached the church, the rearmost were not nearly got from Thirlestane.

Sir Robert shortly after dying, left his family in a state little short of downright beggary, which, they say, the lady herself came to before she died. As Sir Robert's first lady was of the family of Buccleuch, some suspected him of having a share in forwarding the knight's desperate procedure. Certain it is, however, he did not, in this instance, depart from the old family maxim, "*Keep what you have, and catch what you can*," but made a noble hand of the mania of grief, which so overpowered the faculties of the old baron; for when accounts came to be cleared up, a large proportion of the lands turned out to be Buccleuch's. And it is added, on what authority I know not, that when the extravagance of Sir William Scott obliged the Harden family to part with the Thirlestane property, which fell into their hands, the purchasers were bound by the bargain to refund these lands, should the Scotts of Thirlestane ever make good their right to them, either by law or redemption.

The nearest lineal descendent from this second marriage is one Robert Scott, a poor man who lives at the Binks on Teviot, whom the generous Buccleuch has taken notice of and provided for. He is commonly distinguished by the appellation of *Rob the Laird*, from the conviction of what he would have been had he got fair play. With this man, who is very intelligent, I could never find an opportunity of conversing, though I sought it diligently. It is said, he can inform as to many particulars relating to this sad catastrophe; and that, whenever he has occasion to mention a certain great predecessor of his (the Lady of Thirlestane), he distinguishes her by a very uncouth epithet. It must be remarked, that I had access to no records for the purpose of ascertaining the facts above stated, though I believe they are, for the most part, pretty correct. Perhaps much might be learned by applying to the noble representative of the family, the Honourable Lord Napier, who is still possessed of the beautiful mountains round Thirlestane, and who has it at present in contemplation to rebuild and beautify it; which may God grant him health and prosperity to accomplish. It is to this story that the following fragment alludes.

It is not a little singular, that in the Napier genealogy, published in Wood's *Peerage*, from a manuscript contained in Lord Napier's charter-chest, there is no mention made of this catastrophe; nor is it possible, from that genealogy, to ascertain who the heir that was thus taken off has been. Yet there is so little doubt of the traditionary story having been true, that it was the foundation of a lawsuit, which lasted for generations, regarding a part of the lands that belonged either to Sir Robert's second lady, or were hers in reversion. The Sir Robert Scott of Thirlestane, who was warden-depute of the West Border in 1567, and who married Margaret, daughter of Sir Walter Scott, had in fact three sons, and in this chronicle no second lady is mentioned. But on the other hand, his eldest son and heir, Robert, is merely mentioned; and it is evident that he had died young, and without issue. From this it is highly probable, that he was the heir who was supposed to have been poisoned; for it further appears, that some remnants of the estate fell to his brother William, and to his children; but from that time forth they are no more styled Scotts of Thirlestane, until 1666, when one Francis Scott was created a baronet by patent, and designed of Thirlestane in the county of Selkirk. He was the eldest son

Fer, fer hee raide, and fer hee gaed,
Owre mony hyll and daill,
Tyll passynge through the fayre Foreste,
Hee learnit ane waesome tale.

Whare Ettricke wandyrs downe ane playne,
Withe lofty hyllis belayit,
The staitly toweris of Thirlestane
Withe wondyr hee surveyit.

Black hung the bannyr onne the walle;
The trumpit seemit to grane;
And reid, reid raune the bonnye burne,
Whilke erste lyke syller shaene.

Atte first ane noyse, lyke fairie soundis,
Hee indistinctly hearde;
Then countlesse, countlesse were the croudis
Whilke rounde the wallis appearit.

Thousandis of steidis stude onne the hyll,
Of sable trappyngis vayne;
And rounde onne Ettrickis baittle haughis
Grewe no kin kynde of grayne.

Hee gazit, hee wonderit, sair hee fearit
Some recente tragedye;
Atte lengthe hee spyit ane woeful wichte,
Gaun droopynge owre the ley.

Hys bearde wals sylverit owre withe eild:
Pale wals hys cheike wae-worne;
Hys hayre wals lyke the muirlande wylde
Onne a Decembyr morne.

"Haile, reverente brother!" Baldwyn saide,
"Here in this unco lande,
Ane Temple warrioure greetis thee weel,
And offers thee hys hande.

"O telle mee why the people mourne?
Sure all is notte forre guid:
And why, why does the bonnye burn
Rin reid withe Chrystain bluid?"

Auldc Beattie turnit and shuke hys heide,
While downe felle mony a teire;
"O, wellcome, wellcome, sire," hee saide,
"Ane waesome tale to heire:

"The guid Syr Robertis sonne and heir
By cruelle handis lyis slayne,
And all hys wyde domaynis so fayre
To ither lordis are gane.

"Onne sic ane youthe als him they mourne
The sunne did never shyne,—
Insteade of Chyrstain bluid, the burne
Rinnis reid with Rhenis wyne.

"This is the sadde returnynge daie
Hee first behelde the lyght,—
This is the sadde returnynge daie
Hee felle by cruelle spyte.

"And onne this daie, withe pompe and pryde,
Hence you will see him borne,
And hys poor father home return,
Of landis and honouris shorne.

"Come to my littil chambyr stille,
In yonder turette low;
We'll say our prayeris forre the dead,
And forre the livynge too.

"And when thou haste ane fre repaste
Of wheat bread and the wyne,
My tale shalle weite thy honeste cheikis,
Ais oft it has done myne."

* * * * * * * *

Lord Derwent.

A FRAGMENT.

"O why look ye so pale, my lord?
And why look ye so wan?
And why stand mounted at your gate
So early in the dawn?"

"O well may I look pale, ladye;
For how can I look gay,
When I have fought the live-long night,
And fled at break of day?"

"And is the Border troop arrived?
And have they won the day?
It must have been a bloody field,
Ere Derwent fled away.

"But where got ye that stately steed,
So stable and so good?
And where got ye that gilded sword,
So dyed with purple blood?"

"I got that sword in bloody fray,
Last night on Eden downe;[1]
I got the horse and harness too,
Where mortal ne'er got one."

of Patrick Scott of Tanlawhill, commonly called Pate the Laird, and great-grandson to the last Sir Robert Scott by Walter his third son. There is therefore apparently some confusion in the manuscript about this period, which is manifestly very short and imperfect; a circumstance which would naturally enough occur in the embarrassed state of the family. Pate the Laird recovered a mere fragment of the ample estate of Thirlestane, by purchasing the wadsets of a few of the best of the farms around the castle. When Sir Robert was appointed keeper of the West Marches under his father-in-law, he could have mounted his horse at Eltrive Lake, and ridden to the Crurie, near Langholm, on his own lands, a distance of 30 miles. The Honourable Captain William Napier has built a splendid mansion at the old family seat, and beautified the country by many improvements. Why does he not resume the old paternal name?

[1] This ballad relates to an engagement which took place betwixt the Scots and English, in Cumberland, A.D. 1524; for a particular account of which, see the historians of that period.

"Alight, alight, my noble lord;
God mot you save and see;
For never till this hour was I
Afraid to look on thee."

He turned him to the glowing east,
That stained both tower and tree:
"Prepare, prepare, my lady fair,
Prepare to go with me.

"Before this dawning day shall close,
A deed shall here be done,
That men unborn shall shrink to hear,
And dames the tale shall shun.

"The morning blushes to the chin,
The foul intent to see:
Prepare, prepare, my lady fair,
Prepare to follow me."

"Alight, alight, my noble lord,
I'll live or die with thee;
I see a wound deep in your side
And hence you cannot flee."

She looked out o'er her left shoulder
To list a heavy groan;
But when she turned her round again,
Her noble lord was gone.

She looked to east, and west, and south,
And all around the tower
Through house and hall; but man nor horse
She never could see more.

She turned her round and round about,
All in a doleful state;
And there she saw her little foot-page
Alighting at the gate.

"Oh! open, open, noble dame,
And let your servant in;
Our furious foes are hard at hand,
The castle fair to win."

"But tell me, billy, where's my lord?
Or whither is he bound?
He's gone just now, and in his side
A deep and deadly wound."

"Why do you rave, my noble dame,
And look so wild on me?
Your lord lies on the bloody field,
And him you'll never see.

"With Scottish Jardine, hand to hand,
He fought most valiantlye,
Put him to flight, and broke his men,
With shouts of victory.

"But Maxwell, rallying, wheeled about,[1]
And charged us fierce as hell;
Yet ne'er could pierce the English troops
Till my brave master fell.

"Then all was gone; the ruffian Scott
Bore down our flying band;
And now they waste with fire and sword
The Links of Cumberland.

"Lord Maxwell's gone to Carlisle town
With Jardine hastilye,
And young Kilpatrick and Glencairn
Are come in search of thee."

"How dare you lie, my little page,
Whom I pay meat and fee?
The cock has never crowed but once
Since Derwent was with me.

"The bird that sits on yonder bush,
And sings so loud and clear,
Has only three times changed his note
Since my good lord was here."

"Whoe'er it was, whate'er it was,
I'm sure it was not he;
I saw him dead on Eden plain,
I saw him with my ee.

"I saw him stand against an host,
While heaps before him fell;
I saw them pierce his manly side,
And bring the last farewell.

"'O run,' he cried, 'to my ladye,
And bear the fray before;
Tell her I died for England's right.'—
Then word spake never more.

"Come let us fly to Westmoreland,
For here you cannot stay;
Short be thy shrift, our steeds are swift,
And well I know the way."

"I will not fly, I cannot fly;
My heart is wonder sore;
My brain it turns, my blood it burns,
And I dare not look before."

[1] The page's account of this action seems not to be wide of the truth: "On the 17th of Julie, the Lord Maxwell, and Sir Alexander Jardein, with diverse other Scottishmen, in great numbers entered England by the west marches, and Caerleill, with displayed banners, and began to harrie the country, and burn diverse places. The Englishmen assembled on every side, so that they were far more in number than the Scottishmen, and thereupon set feircelie upon their enemies; insomuch that, for the space of an hour, there was a sore fight continued betwixt them. But the Lord Maxwell, like a true politike captain, as of all that knew him he was no less reputed, ceased not to encourage his people; and after that, by the taking of Sir Alexander Jardein and others, they had beene put backe, he brought them in arraie again, and beginning a new skirmish, recovered in manner all the prisoners; took and slew diverse Englishmen; so that he returned with victorie, and led above 300 prisoners with him into Scotland." —*Holinshed.*

She turned her eye to Borrowdale;
Her heart grew chill with dread;—
For there she saw the Scottish bands,
Kilpatrick at their head.

Red blazed the beacon of Pownell,
On Skiddaw there were three;
The warder's horn o'er muir and fell
Was heard continually.

Dark grew the sky, the wind was still,
The sun in blood arose;
But oh! how many a gallant man
Ne'er saw that evening close!

* * * * * * * *

The Laird of Lairistan,

OR THE THREE CHAMPIONS OF LIDDISDALE.

The scene of this ballad is laid in the upper parts of Liddisdale, in which district the several residences of the three champions are situated, as is also the old castle of Hermitage, with the farm-houses of Saughentree and Roughley.

As to the authenticity of the story, all that I can say of it is, that I used to hear it told when I was a boy, by William Scott, a joiner of that country, and was much taken with some of the circumstances. Were I to relate it verbatim, it would only be anticipating a great share of the poem.—One verse is ancient, beginning "O wae be to thee," &c.

"O Dickie, 'tis light, and the moon shines bright,
Will ye gang and watch the deer wi' me?"
"Ay, by my sooth, at the turn o' the night,
We'll drive the holm of the Saughentree."

The moon had turned the roof of heaven;
The ground lay deep in drifted snaw;
The Hermitage bell had rung eleven,
And our yeomen watched behind the ha'.

The deer was skight, and the snaw was light,
And never a blood-drap could they draw:
"Now, by my sooth!" cried Dickie then,
"There's something yonder will fear us a'.

"Right owre the knowe where Liddel lies,
Nae wonder that it derkens my ee,
See yonder's a thing of fearsome size,
And it's moving this way hastilye.

"Say, what is yon, my brother John?
The Lord preserve baith you and me!
But our hearts are the same, and sure our aim,
And he that comes near these bullets shall prie."

"O hand your tongue, my brother dear,
Let us survey't wi' steady ee;
'Tis a dead man they are carrying here,
And 'tis fit that the family warned should be."

They ran to the ha', and they wakened them a',
But none were at home but maidens three;
Then close in the shade of the wall they staid,
To watch what the issue of this would be.

And there they saw a dismal sight,
A sight had nearly freezed their blood;
One lost her sight in the fair moonlight,
And one of them fainted where they stood.

Four stalwart men, on arms so bright,
Came bearing a corpse with many a wound;
His habit bespoke him a lord or knight,
And his fair ringlets swept the ground.

They heard one to another say—
"A place to leave him will not be found:
The door is locked, and the key away;
In the byre will we lay him down."

Then into the byre the corpse they bore,
And away they fled right speedilye;
The rest took shelter behind the door,
In wild amazement as well might be.

And into the byre no ane durst gang,
No, not for the life of his bodye;
But the blood on the snaw was trailed alang,
And they kend a' wasna as it should be.

Next morning all the dalesmen ran,
For soon the word was far and wide;
And there lay the Laird of Lairistan,
The bravest knight on the Border side.

He was wounded behind, and wounded before,
And cloven through the left cheek-bone;
And clad in the habit he daily wore;
But his sword, and his belt, and his bonnet were gone.

Then east and west the word has gane,
And soon to Branxholm ha' it flew,
That Elliot of Lairistan was slain,
And how or why no living knew.

Buccleuch has mounted his milk-white steed,
With fifty knights in his company;
To Hermitage castle they rode with speed,
Where all the dale was summoned to be.

And soon they came, a numerous host,
And they swore and touched the fair bodye;
But Jocky o' Millburn he was lost,
And could not be found in the hale countrye.

"Now wae be to thee, Armstrong o' Millburn!
And O an ill death may'st thou dee!
Thou hast put down brave Lairistan,
But his equal thou wilt never be.

"The Bewcastle men may ramp and rave,
And drive away the Liddisdale kye;
For now is our guardian laid in his grave,
And Branxholm and Thirlestane distant lye."

The dalesmen thus his loss deplore,
And every one his virtues tell:
His hounds lay howling at the door,
His hawks flew idle o'er the fell.

When three long years were come and gone,
Two shepherds sat on Roughley hill;
And aye they sighed and made their moan,
O'er the present times that looked so ill.

"Our young king lives at London town,
Buccleuch must bear him companye;
And Thirlestane's all to flinders gone,
And who shall our protector be?

"And jealous of the Stuart race,
The English lords begin to thraw;
The land is in a piteous case,
When subjects rise against the law.

"Our grief and ruin are forespoke,
The nation has received a stain—
A stain like that on Sundup's cloak,
That never will wash out again."

Amazement kythed in the shepherd's face,
His mouth to open wide began;
He stared and looked from place to place,
As things across his mem'ry ran.

The broidered cloak of gaudy green,
Which Sundup wore, and was sae gay,
For three lang years had ne'er been seen,
At chapel, raid, nor holiday.

Once on a night he overheard,
From two old dames of southron land,
A tale the which he greatly feared,
But ne'er could th'roughly understand.

"Now tell me, neighbour, tell me true;
Your sim'lie bodes us little good;
I fear, the cloak you mentioned now—
I fear 'tis stained with noble blood!"

"Indeed, my friend, you've guessed aright;
I never meant to tell to man
That tale; but crimes will come to light,
Let human wits do what they can.

"But He, who ruleth wise and well,
Hath ordered from his seat on high,
That aye since valiant Elliot fell,
That mantle bears the purple dye;

"And all the waters in Liddisdale,
And all that lash the British shore,
Can ne'er wash out the wondrous macle:
It still seems fresh with purple gore."

Then east and west the word is gane,
And soon to Branxholm ha' it flew;
And Halbert o' Sundup he was ta'en,
And brought before the proud Buccleuch.

The cloak was hung in open hall,
Where ladies and lords of high degree,
And many a one, both great and small,
Were struck with awe the same to see.

"Now tell me, Sundup," said Buccleuch,
"Is this the judgment of God on high!
If that be Elliot's blood we view,
False Sundup, thou shalt surely die!"

Then Halbert turned him where he stood,
And wiped the round tear frae his ee:
"That blood, my lord, is Elliot's blood;
I winna keep in the truth frae thee."

"O ever-alack!" said good Buccleugh,
"If that be true thou tell'st to me,
On the highest tree in Branxholm-heuch,
Stout Sundup, thou must hangit be."

"'Tis Elliot's blood, my lord, 'tis true;
And Elliot's death was wrought by me:
And were the deed again to do,
I'd do't in spite of hell and thee.

"My sister, brave Jock Armstrong's bride,
The fairest flower of Liddisdale,
By Lairistan foully was betrayed,
And roundly has he payed the mail.

"We watched him in her secret bower,
And found her to his bosom prest:
He begged to have his broad claymore,
And dared us both to do our best.

"Perhaps, my lord, ye'll truly say,
In rage from laws of arms we swerved:
Though Lairistan got double play,
'Twas fairer play than he deserved.

"We might have killed him in the dark,
When in the lady's arms lay he;
We might have killed him in his sark,
Yet gave him room to fight or flee.

"'Come on then!' gallant Millburn cried,
'My single arm shall do the deed;
Or heavenly justice is denied,
Or that false heart of thine shall bleed.'

"Then to't they fell, both sharp and snell,
With steady hand and watchful een;
From both the trickling blood-drops fell,
And the words of death were said between

"The first stroke Millburn to him gave,
He ript his bosom to the bone;
Though Armstrong was a yeoman brave,
Like Elliot living there was none.

"His growth was like the Border oak;
His strength the bison's strength outvied;
His courage like the mountain rock;
For skill his man he never tried.

"Oft had we three in border fray,
Made chiefs and armies stand in awe;
And little weened to see the day
On other deadly thus to draw."

The first wound that brave Millburn got,
The tear of rage rowed in his ee;
The next stroke that brave Millburn got,
The blood ran dreeping to his knee.

"My sword I gripped into my hand,
And fast to his assistance ran;—
What could I do? I could not stand
And see the base deceiver win."

'Now turn,' I cried, 'thou limmer loun!
Turn round and change a blow with me,
Or by the righteous powers aboon,
I'll hew the arm from thy bodye.'

"He turned with many a haughty word,
And lounged and passed most furiouslye;
But, with one slap of my broad sword,
I brought the traitor to his knee.

'Now take thou that,' stout Armstrong cried,
'For all the pain thou'st gi'en to me;'
(Though then he shortly would have died)
And ran him through the fair bodye."

Buccleuch's stern look began to change,
To tine a warrior loathe was he;
The crime was called a brave revenge,
And Halbert of Sundup was set free.

Then every man for Millburn mourned,
And wished him to enjoy his own;
But Milburn never more returned,
Till ten long years were come and gone.

Then loud alarms through England ring,
And deeds of death and dool began;
The commons rose against the king,
And friends to diff'rent parties ran.

The nobles join the royal train,
And soon his ranks with grandeur fill;
They sought their foes with might and main,
And found them lying on Edgehill.

The trumpets blew, the bullets flew,
And long and bloody was the fray;
At length, o'erpowered, the rebel crew
Before the royal troops gave way.

"Who was the man," Lord Lindsey cried,
"That fought so well through all the fray?
Whose coat of rags, together tied,
Seems to have seen a better day.

"Such bravery in so poor array,
I never in my life did see;
His valour three times turned the day,
When we were on the point to flee."

Then up there spoke a man of note,
Who stood beside his majestye,
"My liege, the man's a Border Scot,
Who volunteered to fight for thee.

"He says you're kind, but counselled ill,
And sit unstable on your throne;
But had he power unto his will,
He swears he'd kill the dogs each one."

The king he smiled, and said aloud,
"Go bring the valiant Scot to me;
When we have all our foes subdued,
The lord of Liddle he shall be."

The king gave him his gay gold ring,
And made him there a belted knight.
But Millburn bled to save his king,
The king to save his royal right.

The Wife of Crowle.

This fragment is a traditionary story put to rhyme without any addition. The woman lived at Crowle Chapel in Nithsdale. It is given more at large in "The Winter Evening Tales."

And aye she sat by the cheek of the grate,
Pretending to shape and to sew;
But she looked at all that entered the hall,
As if she would look them through.

Her hands she wrung, and at times she sung
Some wild airs for the dead;
Then 'gan to tell a crazy tale,
She told it for a meed.

"I once had a son, but now he is gone,
They tore my son from me;
His life-blood streamed where the cormorant screamed,
On the wild rocks girt by the sea.

So hard his lone bed, and unpillowed his head,
For the dark sea-cave is his urn;
The cliff-flowers weep o'er his slumbers so deep,
And the dead-lights over him burn.

"Say what can restore the form that's no more,
Or illumine the death-set eye?
Yes, a wild mother's tears, and a wild mother's prayers,
A spirit may force from the sky.

"When the sun had rose high, and the season gone by,
My yearnings continued the same;
I prayed to Heaven, both morning and even,
To send me my son, till he came.

"One evening late, by the chimney I sat,
I dreamed of the times that were gone;
Of its chirrup so eiry the cricket was weary,
All silent I sat, and alone.

"The fire burnt bright, and I saw by the light
My own son enter the hall;
A white birchen wand he held in his hand,
But no shadow had he on the wall.

"He looked at the flame, as forward he came,
All steadfast and looked not away;
His motion was still as the mist on the hill,
And his colour like cold-white clay.

"I knew him full well; but the tones of the bell,
Which quavered as midnight it rung,
So stunned me, I strove, but I could not move
My hand, my foot, nor my tongue.

"Blood-drops in a shower then fell on the floor,
From the roof, and they fell upon me;
No water their stain could wash out again;
These blood-drops still you may see.

"His form still grew, and the flame burnt blue,
I stretched out my arms to embrace;
But he turned his dead eye, so hollow and dry,
And so wistfully gazed in my face,

"That my head whirled round, the walls and the ground
All darkened, no more could I see;
But each finger's point, and each finger's joint,
Grew thick as the joint of my knee.

"I wakened ere day, but my son was away,
No word to me he had said;
Though my blood was boiling, and my heart recoiling,
To see him again still I prayed.

"And oft has he come to my lonely home,
In guise that might adamant melt;
He has offered his hand with expression so bland,
But that hand could never be felt.

"I've oft seen him glide so close by my side,
On his grave-cloth the seams I could trace;
The blood from a wound trickled down to the ground,
And a napkin was over his face.

"So oft have I seen that death-like mien,
It has somewhat bewildered my brain;
Yet, though chilled with affright at the terrible sight,
I long still to see it again."

The Tweeddale Raide.

This ballad was written by my nephew, Robert Hogg, student in the College of Edinburgh, on purpose for insertion in the Edinburgh Annual Register. He brought it to me, and I went over it with him, and was so delighted with the humour of the piece, that I advised him to send it with his name. The editor however declined inserting it; and it is here published, word for word as sent to him. A natural inclination to admire youthful efforts may make me judge partially; but I think, if it is not a good imitation of the old Border ballad, I never saw one. The old castle of Hawkshaw was situated in a wild dell, a little to the westward of the farm-house of that name, which stands in the glen of Fruid in Tweedsmuir. It was built, and inhabited long, by the Porteouses, an ancient family of that district. A knight of the name of Sir Patrick Porteous of Hawkshaw was living A.D. 1600. His eldest daughter Janet was married to Scott of Thirlestane. All the places mentioned are in the direct line from Hawkshaw to Tarras, a wild and romantic little river between the Ewes and Liddel. The names of the warriors inserted, are those of families proven to be residing in the district at the same period of time with Patrick Porteous. I cannot find that the ballad is founded on any fact or traditionary tale, save that Porteous once, having twenty English prisoners, of whom he was tired, took them out to the top of a hill called the Fala Moss, and caused his men fell them one by one with a mall, and fling them into a large hole for burial. Whilst they were busy with some of the hindmost, one of those previously felled started up from the pit and ran off. He was pursued for a long way, and at last, being hard pressed, he threw himself over a linn in Glen-Craigie, and killed himself. As the pit in which they were buried was in a moss, some of the bones were distinguishable by the shepherds, who digged for them, only a few years ago.

Pate Porteous sat in Hawkshaw tower,
An' O right douf an' dour was he;
Nae voice of joy was i' the ha',
Nae sound o' mirth or revelry.

His brow was hung wi' froward scowl,
His ee was dark as dark could be;
An' aye he strade across the ha',
An' thus he spoke right boisterouslye:

"Yestreen, on Hawkshaw hills o' green,
My flocks in peace and safety strayed;
To-day, nor ewe, nor steer, is seen
On a' my baronie sae braid:

"But I will won, an' haud my ain,
Wi' ony wight on Border side;
Make ready then my merry men a',
Make ready, swiftly we maun ride.

"Gae saddle me my coal-black steed,
Gae saddle me my bonny gray,
An' warder, sound the rising note,
For we hae far to ride or day."

The slogan jar was heard afar,
An' soon owre hill, owre holt, an' brae,
His merry men came riding in,
All armed and mounted for the fray.

As they fared oure the saddle-yoke,
The moon raise owre the Merk-side bree;
"Welcome, auld dame," Pate Porteous cried,
"Aft hae ye proved a friend to me.

"Gin thou keep on, but clud or mist,
Until Glendarig steps we won,
I'll let you see as brave a chace
As ever down the Esk was run."

As they rade down by Rangecleuch ford,
They met Tam Bold o' Kirkhope town;
"Now whar gang ye, thou rank reaver,
Beneath the ae light o' the moon?"

"When ye were last at Hawkshaw ha',
Tam Bold, I had a stock right guid;
Now I hae neither cow nor ewe
On o' the bonny braes o' Fruid."

"O, ever alak!" quo' auld Tam Bold,
"Now, Pate, for thee my heart is wae;
I saw your flocks gang owre the muir
O' Wingate by the skreigh o' day.

"Pate, ye maun ride for Liddel side,
An' tarry at the Tarras lair;
Gin they get owre the Border line,
Your ewes an' kye you'll see nae mair."

As they rade owre by Sorbie-swire,
The day-light glimmered on the lea;
"O, lak-a-day! my bonny gray,
I find ye plaittin' at the knee.

"Streek gin ye dow to Tarras flow,
On you depends your master's a',
An' ye's be fed wi' bread an' wine,
When ye gang hame to Hawkshaw ha'."

They spurred owre moss, owre muir, an' fell,
Till mony a naig he swarf'd away;
At length they wan the Tarras moss,
An' lightit at the skreigh o' day.

The stots came rowtin' up the bent,
Tossin' their white horns to the sun;
"Now, by my sooth!" Pate Porteous cried,
"My owsen will be hard to won."

Up came the captain o' the gang,
I wat a stalwart lad was he;
"What lowns are ye," he bauldly cried,
"That dare to stop my kye an' me?"

"Light down, light down, thou fause Southron,
An' sey a skelp or twa wi' me,
For ye hae reaved my flocks an' kye,
An', by my sooth, revenged I'll be.

"It's ne'er be said a Tweeddale knight
Was tamely harried o' his gear,
That Pate o' Hawkshaw e'er was cowed,
Or braved by Southron arm in weir."

Then up an' spak the English chief,
A dauntless blade I wat was he,
"Now wha are ye, ye saucy lown,
That speaks thus haughtilye to me?"

"My name it is Pate Porteous hight,
Light down an' try your hand wi' me;
For, by my sooth, or thou shalt yield,
Or one of us this day shall die."

The Southron turned him round about,
An' lightly on the ground lap he;
"I rede thee, Scot, thou meet'st thy death
If thou dar'st cross a sword wi' me;

"Have ye ne'er heard i' reife or raide,
O' Ringan's Rab o' Thorlberrye?
If ye hae not, ye hae excuse
For cracking here sae crabbedlye.

"But I can tell thee, muirland Pate,
Wi' hingin' mou an' blirtit ee,
Ye'll tell your wife an' bairns at hame,
How Ringan's Robin yerkit thee."

Pate Porteous was a buirdly wight,
An arm o' strength an' might had he,
He brooked nae fear, but made his bragg
In deeds o' desperate devilrye.

"Have done," he cried, "thou stalwart lown,
Thou Southron thief o' gallow's fame,
I only ken that I am wranged,
An' thou shalt answer for the same."

They tied their horses to the birk,
An' drew their swords o' mettle keen;
But sic a fray, as chanced that day,
On Border-side was never seen.

Pate Porteous was the first ae man
That shawed the red bluid to the ee,
Out o' the Southron's brawny thigh
He carved a slice right dextrouslye:

"Now tak thou that, fause Ringan's Rab,
An' muckle good may't do to thee,
'Twill learn ye how to slice the hams
O' my guid kye at Thorlberrye."

"It's but a scart," quo' Ringan's Rab,
"The stang o' a wasp is waur to bide;
But or that we twa part again.
I'll pay it on thy ain backside."

"Now, fy lay on!" quo' Hawkshaw Pate,
"Now, fy lay on, an' dinna spare;
If frae a Southron e'er I flinch,
I'se never wield a weapon mair."

They fought it lang, they fought it sair,
But scarcely doubtfu' was the day,
When Southrons round their captain closed,
An' shouted for the gen'ral fray.

Clash went the swords along the van;
It was a gallant sight to see:
"Lay on them, lads," cried Hawkshaw Pate,
"Or, faith, we'll sup but spairinglye."

"Now, fy lay on!" quo' Ringan's Rab,
"Lay on them, lads o' English blude,
The Scottish brand i' dalesmen's hand
'Gainst Southland weapon never stude."

"Lay on them, lads," cried Hawkshaw Pate;
"Our horses lack baith hay an' corn;
An' we maun a' hae English naigs
Out owre the Penraw Cross the morn."

The Tweedies gart their noddles crack,
Like auld pot-metal, yank for yank;
Montgomery, wi' his spearmen guid,
He bored them trimly i' the flank.

An' Sandy Welsh, he fought an' swore,
An' swore an' fought fu' desperatelye;
But Jockie o' Talla got a skelp
That clove him to the left ee-bree.

The Murrays fought like dalesmen true,
An' stude i' reid bluid owre the shoon;
The Johnstons, an' the Frazers too,
Made doughty wark or a' was done.

The Tods an' Kerrs gaed hand an' gluve,
An' bathed i' bluid their weapons true;
An' Jamie o' Carterhope was there,
An' Harstane stout, an' young Badlewe.

Brave Norman Hunter o' Polmood,
He stood upon the knowe sae hie,
An' wi' his braid-bow in his hand,
He blindit mony a Southron ee.

The bludc ran down the Tarras bank,
An' reddened a' the Tarras burn;
"Now, by my sooth," said Hawkshaw Pate,
"I never stood sae hard a turn.

"I never saw the Southrons stand
An' brave the braidsword half so weel."
"Deil tak the dogs!" cried Sandy Welsh,
"I trow their hides are made o' steel.

"My sword is worn unto the back,
An' jagged an' nickit like a thorn;
It ne'er will ser' another turn,
But sawin' through an auld toop-horn.

"But by this sword, an' by the rood,
An' by the deil an' a' his kin,—"
"Lord! stop your gab," quo' auld Will Tod,
"Sic swearin' is a deadly sin.

"Haud still your gab, an' ply your sword,
Then swear like hell when a' is done;
If I can rightly judge or guess,
The day's our ain, an' that right soon."

They beat them up the Tarras bank,
An' down the back o' Birkhope brae;
Had it not been the Tarras flow,
Nae Englishmen had 'scaped that day.

There were three an thirty Englishmen
Lay gasping on the Tarras moss,
An' three and thirty mae were ta'en,
An' led out owre the Penraw Cross.

The Tweeddale lads gat horse an' kye,
An' ransom gowd, an' gear their fill,
An' aye sin syne they bless the day
They fought sae weel on Tarras hill.

Pate Porteous drave his ewes an' kye
Back to their native hills again;
He hadna lost a man but four,
An' Jockie o' Talla he was ane.

Stout Ringan's Rab gat hame wi' life,
O he was yetherit an' yerkit sair;
But he came owre the Penraw Cross
To herry Tweeddale glens nae mair.

Robin an' Nanny.

This ballad, or rather rural tale, was written at a period of life so early, that I have quite forgotten when and in what circumstances it was written: but I think I have had the manuscript by me upwards of twenty years. It is exceedingly imperfect; but a natural fondness for the productions of my early years, and some recollections that have scarcely left a trace behind, induce me to give it a place. It has not the least resemblance in style to aught I have written since, and I believe I have nothing in my hand that was previously written. Those who wish me well will not regret that my style has undergone such a manifest change; for into a worse one it could scarcely have fallen.

Snell an' frosty was the dawin',
Blue the lift as ony bell,
Cauld the norlan' wind was blawin',
Fast the drift came owre the fell;

Whan poor Nanny, softly creepin'
Out frae yont her auld gudeman,
Wha she trow'd was soundly sleepin',
Though he heard how a' was gaun;

Wi' her heather-cowe clean wiping
A' the floor, frae end to end;
Soon the reek gaed blue an' piping
Up the lum wi' mony a bend.

Then within her little sheelin',
On a wee lock cosey hay,
Nanny cowered, and humbly kneelin',
Sighin', thus begoud to pray:—

"Father o' the yird an' heaven,
Thou wha leev'st aboon the sky,
Wha a mind to me hast given,
An' a saul that canna die;

"Though I've often wandered frae thee,
Thoughtless o' thy love to me;
Nae where can I flee but to thee,
Nae ane can I trust but thee.

"Little hae I had to grieve me;
Now my heart is unco sair;
My puir lassie, forced to leave me,
Take, O take her to thy care!

"Whan thou gae'st her I was gratefu',
Whan thou tak'st her I'll resign;
Why sude I be fleyed or fretfu'?
She's i' better hands than mine.

"But she's bonnie, young, an' friendless,
Gars me think o' her the mair;
Yet I'll trust her to thy kindness;
Take, O take her to thy care!"

Robin, though he couldna see her,
Listened weel to a' she said;
Fixed his kindly heart was wi' her,
Joinin' ilka vow she made.

Through the cot then bustled Nanny,
Busy out an' in she ran;
Yet wi' footsteps fleet an' cannie,
Laith to waken her gudeman.

"Hout," quo' he, "ye crazy gawkie,
What has gart ye rise so soon?"
"Troth, gudeman, our wee bit hawkie,
Twice had raised the hungry croon.

"At the door the chickens yaupit,
Keen the wind comes owre the lea,
Deep wi' snaw the grun' is happit,
Puir things! they war like to die."

"Auld, dementit, donnart creature,
Gudesake! quat this fyky way,
Else your cares will bang your nature,
An' ye'll dee afore your day.

"Aye sin' ever Mary left ye,
A' the night ye hotch an' grane;
Ye've o' sleep an' rest bereft me,
Lye i' peace, or lye your lane.

"Langer here she wadna tarry;
But she's virtuous as she's fair:
What's to ail our bonnie Mary!
What means a' this restless care?"

"Dinna, Robin, dinna vex me,
Laith am I frae rest to keep;
But my dreams sae sair perplex me,
I dare nouther rest nor sleep.

"Dreams maun a' be redd, believe me;
Visions are nae sent in vain;
Reason canna now relieve me,
Canna ease my eerie pain.

"Surely when asleep we're lyin',
Like a lump o' senseless clay,
Then our sauls are busy flyin',
Viewin' places far away."

"Wad ye, stupit, crazy body,
Quite owreturn philosophye?
Owre an' owre again I've showed ye
Sic a thing can never be.

"If our sauls were sent a-rangin',
To Jerus'lem or the moon,
In a moment wakenin', changin',
How cou'd they come back sae soon?

"They're within us, never doubt them;
If they dandered here an' there,
What way cou'd we leeve without them?
We wad never waken mair.

"Nanny, whan your spirit leaves you,
Lang an' sound your sleep will be!
Let nae wayward fancies grieve you;
Tear o' thine I downa see."

"Never war my dreams sae eerie,
But their meanin' I hae seen;
I, this mornin', raise mair weary
Than I gaed to bed yestreen.

"Never mair, whate'er betide me,
May I sic a vision see;
My dear Mary sat aside me,
Lovely as she wont to be.

"On her lap a birdie restit,
Kind it look'd, an' sweetly sang;
Whan her lily hand caressed it,
Wi' its notes the woodlands rang.

"Aye it waxed, an' flaffed, an' hootit,
Till an awsome beast it grew;
Still she fonder grew about it,
Though it pecked her black an' blue.

"Soon her face in beauty's blossom,
A' wi' blude an' fleekers hang;
Still she pressed it to her bosom,
Grat, but wadna let it gang.

"A' her breast was torn an' wounded,
Or the monster took its flight;
Never was my heart sae stoundit!
Never saw I sic a sight!

"Something ails our bonnie Mary,
Sure as glents the mornin' sun."
Robin leugh, an' jibit sairly,
But wi' him it was nae fun.

Up he raise wi' fears inspired,
Rowed him in his gaucy plaid,
To the hay-stack dass retired,
Laid his bonnet off his head:

Then, in tone right melancholy,
Lyin' grooflin' on the hay,
There he prayed in words most holy,
For his Mary far away.

Mary was baith young an' clever,
Sweet as e'enin's softest gale;
Fairer flower than Mary never
Blossomed in a Highland dale.

Blythe the lark her notes can vary,
Light the lamb skips owre the lea;
Blyther than the lark was Mary,
Lighter than the lamb was she.

She had seen the eighteenth summer
Hap wi' blooms the Highland lea,
Weel the heather-bells become her,
Wavin' owre her dark ee-bree.

Muckle lair they twa had taught her,
Fittin' her for ony thing:
Mary was an only daughter;
She cou'd read, an' write, an' sing.

Now that she's for service ready,
She maun gae her bread to earn;
To the town to wait her lady,
An' the city gaits to learn.

Nanny sighed, an' grat, an kissed her—
She was aye a bairn sae kind!
Robin just shook hands, an' blessed her,
Bidding her her Maker mind.

Cauld, that day, came in the winter,
Light she tripped adown the dale;
Dash, a gig came up ahint her,
Swifter than the mountain gale.

"Bonnie lassie, ye'll be weary,
Will ye mount an' ride wi' me?"
"Thank ye, sir; but, troth, I'm eiry
Sic a sight ye doughtna see.

"Gentle fo'ks are unco saucy,
Tauntin' aye the blate an' mean."
"Woh!" quo' he, "—your hand, my lassie,
Sit ye there an' tak a lean."

Crack the whip came,—snortin', prancin',
Down the glen the courser sprang;
Mary's heart wi' joy was dancin',
Baith her lugs wi' pleasure rang.

Whan the eagle quits his eyrie,
Fast he leaves the cliffs behind;
Swifter flew our spark an' Mary—
Faster cluve the winter wind.

Ford nor ferry aince detained them,
Fleet they skimmed the dale an' doon—
Steeples, towers, an' hills, behind them
Vanished like the settin' moon.

At the stages where they rested,
Fast they drank the bluid-red wine;
Mary thought (her smile confessed it),
Never man was ha'f sae kin'.

By the way his arm was round her,
Firm, for fear that she should fa';
Aft his glances raised her wonder,
Aye she blushed an' turned awa.

First he pressed her hand—he kissed it—
Then her cheek wi' sair ado—
Lang or night, whane'er he listit,
Aye he pree'd her cherry mou'.

Kind her heart, o' guile unwary,
Taken by his generous way,
Bonny Mary, artless Mary,
Step by step was led astray.

Through the window aft they taukit,
Whan the street was hushed an' still;
Ilka Sunday out they walkit,
To the glen or bracken hill.

Whan the flower o' gowd sae yellow
Owre the broom-wood splendour threw;
Whan the breeze, sae mild and mellow,
Frae the primrose drank the dew;

In a bower o' willow bushes,
Oft at noontide wad they lye,
Strewed wi' flowers, and saft wi' rushes,
Happed wi' foliage frae the sky.

Owre their heads his rural ditty
Sang the blackbird on the spray;
Pretty songster! O for pity,
Cease thy am'rous roundelay!

See, the modest daisy blushes,
Bonnie birks they wave an' weep;
While the breeze, among the bushes,
Wails for virtue lulled asleep.

Can ye pour your notes sae airy,
Wildly owre the woodland dale,
While the kind and bonnie Mary
Ever maun the time bewail?

Mary's parents sairly missed her,
Word o' her they couldna learn;
Love an' sorrow sae harassed her,
She grew an unmindfu' bairn.

A' their reas'nin' late an' early,
Only hetter blew the coal—
Robin's heart misgae him sairly,
Nanny could nae langer thole.

Robin washed his wedding bonnet,
Hang it on the clipse to dry;
Sindry methes an' maels war on it;
It had lien lang idle by.

Robin's Sunday coat and doublet
Nanny brushed fu' braw an' clean;
Streekit they had lien untroublit—
Seldom needit—seldom seen.

Clean his chin, sae aft weel theekit;
White his serk as driven snaw:
His gray hair weel kaimed an' sleekit;
Robin looked fu' trig an' braw.

"Nanny, now it's near midsimmer,
Keep the yows an' kye frae skaith,
I maun see the dear young limmer,
Though to gang sae far I'm laith.

"She might write, the careless hussey,
Gladly I wad postage pay;
But, nae doubt, she's hadden busy,
Maybe baith by night an' day.

She's a trust consigned by Heaven
To our arms to guard and guide;
She's a gift in kindness given;
She's our ain whate'er betide.

"Let nae sinfu' doubts distress ye;
Heavy news are waur than nane:
If the lassie's fair an' healthy,
In a week I'll come again."

Nibbie in his nieve he lockit,
Round his waist his plaid he twined;
Bread an' cheese in ilka pocket,
Robin left his cot behind.

Seen'ry grand, nor castle gaudy,
Drew ae glowr frae Robin's ee;
On he joggit, slaw an' sadly,
Nought but Mary mindit he.

Men an' boys at nought he set them,
Question coudna draw reply;
Every bonnie lass that met him,
Sharp he looked till she was by.

Aye as he the town drew nigher,
Wonder kythed i' Robin's leuks;
Chariots rattled by like fire—
"What a routh o' lords an' dukes!"

Aye his bonnet aff he whuppit;
Time-o'-day gae to them a'—
Up the mail came—Robin stoppit—
"Here's the grandest chap ava!

"A' his servants ride without there,
Some to wait, an' some to ca';
He's been giein' alms, nae doubt there,
Gars his man the trumpet blaw."

Aye the lords came thick an' thicker,
Knights an' great men round him swarm;
O' their honours to mak sicker
Robin's bonnet's 'neath his arm.

Crippled, thirsty, baugh, an' tired,
To the Cross he wan at last;
Stood amazed, an' aft inquired,
"Where's the folk gaun a' sae fast?"

For the lady's house he lookit,
Wha enticed his bairn frae him;
Wi' his stick the door he knockit,
Then stood quakin' every limb.

Sic a picture ne'er was seen in
Edinborough town before,
Robin owre his pike-staff leanin',
At the lady's glancin' door.

A' his face was din wi' owder;
Short an' deep his breath he drew;
His gray locks owre ilka shoulder,
Waved wi' ilka blast that blew.

Shoon, wi' buckles bright as may be;
Coat the colour o' the sea;
Wide the cuffs, an' ilka laibie
Fauldit owre aboon his knee.

When he heard the bolt a-loosin',
Round he turned his wat'ry ee;
Haflins feared, an' half rejoicin',
Mary's face he hoped to see.

'Twas a madam, proud an' airy,
Spiered what made him there to ca'—
"'Twas to see his daughter Mary:"
"Mary wasna there ata'!

"Mistress Lang had slyly watched her
Doubtin' sair her 'haviour light,
An' wi' gentle spark had catched her
At the dead hour o' the night.

"Straight she turned her aff in anger,
Quite owre ruin's fearfu' brink;
Virtue steels her breast nae langer,
As she brewed she now maun drink."

Robin heaved his staff the doorward,
Looked as he'd attack the place;
Just as he was rushin' forward,
Clash the door came in his face.

Now a place, his grief to vent in,
Fast he sought, an' in the dust
A' the night he lay lamentin',
Till his heart was like to burst.

Aft he cried, "My only daughter,
How my hopes are marred in thee!
O that I had sooner sought her,
Or had she but staid wi' me!

"Should I gang an' never see her,
How could I her mother tell?
Should I gang an' no forgie her,
How will God forgie mysel'?"

Lang he spiered at shops an' houses,
An' at queans he chanced to meet;
Some fo'k bade him seek the closses—
Some the stairs aneath the street.

Let nae sufferer, all unwary,
Broken-hearted though he be,
Nor the proud voluptuary
Bend to heaven a hopeless ee.

Sure as flows the silver fountain;
Sure as poortith meets disdain;
Sure as stable stands the mountain;
Sure as billows heave the main—

There's a God that rules above us—
Rules our actions to his mind;
One will ever—ever love us,
If our hearts are meek an' kind.

Robin wand'rin' late an' early,
At the dead o' a' the night,
Heard a lassie pleadin' sairly,
In a sad an' waefu' plight.

"Let me in," she cried, "till mornin';
Then I'se trouble you nae mair."
They within, her mis'ry scornin',
Stormed an' threatened unco sair.

"A' your whinin's out o' season;
We hae borne w'ye mony a day;
Had ye listened ought to reason,
Ye had been a lady gay;

"Might hae in your chariot ridden,
Clad wi' silks o' ev'ry hue,
Had ye done as ye were bidden:—
Get ye gone, or ye shall rue."

"O, I am a helpless creature,
Let me in, for sair I rue!
Though it shocks my very nature,
What you bid me I will do."

"Haud!" quo' Robin, hastin' near her,
"Haud, or else ye're lost for aye!
Think o' friends wha hold you dearer,
Think what will your parents say!"

Straight she caught his hand an' kissed it,
Sad she looked, but nought could say;
Round his knees her arms she twistit,
Shricked, an' faintit quite away.

Weel she kend his every feature,
Spottit plaid, an' bonnet blue—
Ye hae felt the throes o' nature—
Need I tell the case to you?

'Twas his ain, his bonny Mary,
Here he fand in sic a state,
Sufferin', for ae step unwary,
Near a sad an' shamefu' fate.

She had loved, an' sair repentit—
She had wept an' wept her fill;
But all proffers had resentit
That could lead her mair to ill.

Woman, Nature's bonniest blossom,
Soft desire may beet thine eye,
Yet within thy heavin' bosom
Dwells deep-blushing modestye!

O let never lover sever
From its stalk this gem of morn,
Else it droops an' dies for ever,
Leavin' bare the festerin' thorn!

Woman's maiden love's the dearest,
Sweetest bliss that Heaven can give,
Thine the blame the garland wearest,
If through life it disna live.

Sweet the rose's early blossom,
Opening to the morning ray;
For one blemish on its bosom,
Would you crush it in the clay?

Though the tender scion's woundit
By a reptile's pois'nous twine,
Must the noxious weeds around it
In its ruin all combine?

Female youth, to guile a stranger,
Doomed too oft to endless pain,
Set the butt of every danger,
Left the mark of cold disdain:—

Should stern justice blot a grievance
Out from Nature's mighty sum,
First of a' may plead forbearance,
Female innocence o'ercome.

Robin showed his dear affection,
Gae his bairn a welcome kiss,
Never made one harsh reflection,
Never said she'd done amiss.

To her native cottage led her,
Heard her suff'rins by the way;
Short the answer Robin made her,
"A' like lost sheep gang astray!"

Thus, from guilt an' dire destruction,
Robin saved his fallen child;
Mourned alone her base seduction,
Won her soul by manners mild.

Aft, of Heaven, in accents movin',
Pardon begged for errors past:
Kind regard, an' language lovin',
Marked the parent to the last.

Hearts replete with love an' duty
Easiest levelled i' the dust;
Guardians over female beauty,
Nice an' precious is your trust.

Should stern justice blot ae grievance
Out o' Nature's mighty sum,
First of a' may plead forbearance,
Female innocence o'ercome.

Sandy Tod.

A SCOTTISH PASTORAL.

Who has learned in love to languish?
Who has felt affliction's rod?
They will mourn the melting anguish,
And the loss o' Sandy Tod.

Sandy was a lad o' vigour,
Lithe an' tight o' lith an' limb:
For a stout an' manly figure,
Few could ding or equal him.

In a cottage poor and nameless,
By a little bouzy linn,
Sandy led a life right blameless,
Far frae ony strife or din.

Annan's fertile dale beyon' him
Spread her fields an' meadows green;
Hoary Hartfell towered aboon him,
Smiling to the sun—gude-e'en.

Few his wants, his wishes fewer;
Save his flocks, nae care had he:
Never heart than his was truer,
Tender to the last degree.

He was learned, and every tittle
That he read, believed it true;
Saving chapters cross an' kittle,
He could read his Bible through.

Aft he read the acts of Joseph,
How wi' a' his friends he met;
Aye the hair his noddle rose off,
Aye his cheeks wi' tears were wet.

Seven bonnie buskit simmers
O'er the Solway Frith had fled,
Sin' a flock o' ewes an' gimmers,
Out amang the hills he fed.

Some might brag o' knowledge deeper,
But nae herd was loed sae weel;
Sandy's hirsel proved their keeper
Was a eannie carefu' chiel.

Aye, when ony tentless lammie
Wi' its neibours chanced to go,
Sandy kend the careless mammy,
Whether she cried *mae* or no.

Warldly wealth an' grandeur scorning,
Weel he liked his little bield;
Ilka e'ening, ilka morning,
Sandy to his Maker kneeled.

You wha bouze the wine sae nappy,
An' are fanned wi' loud applause,
Can ye trow the lad was happy?
Really, 'tis believed, he was.

In the day sae dark an' showery,
I hae seen the bonnie bow,
When arrayed in all its glory,
Vanish on the mountain's brow.

I hae seen the rose of Yarrow,
While it bloomed upon the spray,
Blushing by its flaunting marrow,
Quickly fade, an' fade for aye.

Fading as the forest roses,
Transient as the radiant bow,
Fleeting as the shower that follows,
Is dame Happiness, below.

Unadmired she'll hover near ye,
In the rural sport she'll play;
Woo her—she'll at distance hear ye,
Press her—she is gane for aye.

She had Sandy aye attendit;
Seemed obedient to his nod;
Now his happy hours are endit,—
Lack-a-day for Sandy Tod!

I' the kirk ae Sunday sittin',
Where to be he seldom failed,
Sandy's tender heart was smitten
Wi' a wound that never healed.

Sally, dressed in hat an' feather,
Worshipped in a neibrin' pew;
Sandy sat—he kendna whether:
Sandy felt—he wistna how.

Though the parson charmed the audience,
An' drew tears frae mony een,
Sandy heard a noise, like baudrons
Murring i' the bed at e'en!

Ainee or twice his sin alarmed him,—
Down he looked an' breathed a prayer;
Sally had o' mind disarmed him,
Heart an' soul an' a' was there!

Luckily her een were from him;
Aye they beamed anither road;
Ainee a smiling glance set on him—
"Mercy, Lord!" quo' Sandy Tod.

A' that night he lay an' turned him,
Fastit a' the following day,
Till the eastern lamps were burnin',
An' ca'd up the gloaming gray.

Res'lute made by desperation,
Down the glen in haste he ran;
Soon he reached her habitation,
A forfoughten love-sick man.

I wad sing the happy meeting,
Were it new or strange to thee;
Weel ye ken, 'tis but repeating
What has passed 'tween ane an' me.

Ae white hand around me pressed hard,
Oft my restless heart has felt;
But when hers on Sandy rested,
His fond heart was like to melt.

Sandy's breast wi' love was luntin',
Modest Sally speechless lay,
Orion's sceptre bored the mountain,
Loud the cock proclaimed the day.

Sandy rase—his bonnet daddit—
Begged a kiss—gat nine or ten;
Then the hay, sae rowed an' saddit,
Towzled up that nane might ken.

You hae seen, on April morning,
Light o' heart the playful lamb,
Skipping, dancing, bondage scorning,
Wander heedless o' its dam.

Sometimes gaun, an' sometimes rinning,
Sandy to his mountains wan;
Roun' about his flocks gaed singing;
Never was a blyther man.

Never did his native nation,
Sun or sky, wear sic a hue
In his een the hale creation
Wore a face entirely new.

Weel he loed his faithfu' Ruffler,
Weel the bird sang on the tree;
Meanest creatures doomed to suffer,
Brought the tear into his ee.

Sandy's heart was undesigning,
Soft and loving as the dove,
Scarcely could it bear refining
By the gentle fire o' love.

Sally's blossom soon was blighted
By untimely winter prest;
Sally had been wooed, an' slighted,
By a farmer in the West.

But a wound that baffled healing,
Came from that once cherished flame;
Fell disease, in silence stealing,
Pressed upon her lovely frame.

Her liquid eye so brightly meek,
Grew dim—the pulse of life beat low;
The rose still bloomed upon her cheek,
But ah! it wore a hectic glow.

Every day to Sandy dearer,
Mair bewitching, an' mair sweet;
Aince when he gaed west to see her
She lay in her winding-sheet.

Yet the farmer still was cheery,
Reckless, careless o' his crime,
Though the maid that loed him dearly
He had slain in early prime.

Sternies, blush, an' hide your faces!
Veil thee, moon, in sable hue!
Else thy locks, for human vices,
Soon will dreep wi' pity's dew!

Thou who rul'st the rolling thunder!
Thou who dart'st the flying flame!
Wilt thou vengeance aye keep under,
Due for injured love an' fame?

Cease, dear maid, thy kind bewailing,
In thy ee the tear-drops shine;
Cease to mourn thy sex's failing,
I may drap a tear for mine.

Man the lord o' the creation,
Lightened wi' a ray divine,
Lost to feeling, truth, an' reason,
Lags the brutal tribes behind.

You hae seen the harmless conie,
Following hame its mate to rest,
One ensnared, the frightened cronie,
Flee amazed wi' panting breast—

So amazed, an' dumb wi' horror,
Sandy fled he kendna where;
Never heart than his was sorer,
It was mair than he could bear.

Seven days on yonder mountain
He lay sobbing, late an' soon,
Till discovered by a fountain,
Railing at the dowie moon.

Weeping a' the day he'd wander
Through yon dismal glen alane;
By the stream at night wad dander,
Raving o'er his Sally's name.

Shunned an' pitied by the world,
Lang a humbling sight was he,
Till one frenzied moment hurled
Him to lang eternity.

Sitting on yon steep so rocky,
Fearless as the boding crow,—
No, dear maid, I winna shock thee,
Wi' the bloody scene below.

'Neath yon aik, decayed an' rotten',
Where the hardy woodbine twines,
Now in peace he lies forgotten;
Ower his head these simple lines:

"Lover, pause, while I implore thee,
Still to walk in Virtue's road;
An' to say, as ye walk o'er me,
Lack-a-day for Sandy Tod!"

Farewell to Ettrick.

Fareweel, green Ettrick, fare-thee-weel!
I own I'm unco laith to leave thee;
Nane kens the half o' what I feel,
Nor half the cause I hae to grieve me.

There first I saw the rising morn;
There first my infant mind unfurled,
To ween that spot where I was born,
The very centre of the world.

I thought the hills were sharp as knives,
An' the braid lift lay whomel'd on them,
An' glowred wi' wonder at the wives
That spak o' ither hills ayon' them.

As ilka year gae something new,
Addition to my mind or stature,
So fast my love for Ettrick grew,
Implanted in my very nature.

I've sung, in mony a rustic lay,
Her heroes, hills, and verdant groves;
Her wilds an' valleys fresh and gay,
Her shepherds' and her maidens' loves.

I had a thought,—a poor vain thought!
That some time I might do her honour;
But a' my hopes are come to nought,
I'm forced to turn my back upon her.

She's thrown me out o' house an' hauld;
My heart got never sic a thrust;
An' my poor parents, frail an' auld,
Are forced to leave their kindred dust.

But fare-ye-weel, my native stream,
Frae a' regret be ye preserved!
Ye'll may be cherish some at hame,
Wha dinna just sae weel deserve't.

There is nae man on a' your banks
Will ever say that I did wrang him;
The lassies hae my dearest thanks
For a' the joys I had amang them.

Though twined by rough an' ragin' seas,
An' mountains capt wi' wreaths o' snaw,
To think o' them I'll never cease,
As lang as I can think ava.

I'll make the Harris rocks to ring
Wi' ditties wild when nane shall hear;
The Lewis shores shall learn to sing
The names o' them I lo'ed sae dear;

But there is ane aboon the lave,
I'll carve on ilka lonely green;
The sea-bird tossin' on the wave,
Shall learn the name o' bonnie Jean.

Ye gods take care o' my dear lass!
That as I leave her I may find her;
Till that blest time shall come to pass,
When we shall meet nae mair to sinder.

Fareweel, my Ettrick! fare-thee-weel!
I own I'm unco laith to leave thee;
Nane kens the half o' what I feel,
Nor half o' that I hae to grieve me.

My parents crazy grown wi' eild,
How I rejoice to stand their stay!
I thought to be their help an' shield,
An' comfort till their hindmost day:
Wi' gentle hand to close their een,
An' weet the yird wi' mony a tear,
That held the dust o' ilka frien';
O' friends sae tender an' sincere:

It winna do:—I maun away
To yon rough isle, sae bleak an' dun;
Lang will they mourn, baith night an' day
The absence o' their darling son.

An' my dear Will! how will I fen',
Without thy kind an' ardent care?
Without thy verse-inspirin' pen,
My muse will sleep an' sing nae mair.

Fareweel to a' my kith an' kin!
To ilka friend I held sae dear!
How happy hae we often been,
Wi' music, mirth an' hamely cheer!

Nae mair your gilded banks at noon,
Swells to my sang in echoes glad;
Nae mair I'll screed the rantin' tune,
That haflins put the younkers mad.

Nae mair amang the haggs an' rocks,
While hounds wi' music fill the air,
We'll hunt the sly an' sulky fox,
Or trace the wary circlin' hare.

My happy days wi' you are past,
An', waes my heart, will ne'er return!
The brightest day may overcast,
An' man was made at times to mourn.

But if I ken my dyin' day,
Though a foreworn an' waefu' man,
I'll tak my staff, an' post away,
To yield my life where it began.

If I should sleep nae mair to wake,
In yon far isle beyond the tide,
Set up a headstane for my sake,
An' prent upon its ample side;

"In memory of a shepherd boy,
Who left us for a distant shore;
Love was his life, and song his joy;
But now he's dead—we add no more!"

Fareweel, green Ettrick, fare-thee-weel!
I own I'm something wae to leave thee;
Nane kens the half o' what I feel,
Nor half the cause I hae to grieve me!

The Author's Address to his auld dog Hector.

Come, my auld, towzy, trusty friend,
What gars ye look sae dung wi' wae?
D'ye think my favour's at an end,
Because thy head is turnin' gray?

Although thy strength begins to fail,
Its best was spent in serving me;
An' can I grudge thy wee bit meal,
Some comfort in thy age to gie?

For mony a day, frae sun to sun,
We've toiled fu' hard wi' ane anither;
An' mony a thousand mile thou'st run,
To keep my thraward flocks thegither.

To nae thrawn boy nor naughty wife,
Shall thy auld banes become a drudge;
At cats an' callans a' thy life,
Thou ever bor'st a mortal grudge;

An' whiles thy surly look declared,
Thou lo'ed the women warst of a';
Because my love wi' thee they shared,
A matter out o' right or law.

When sittin' wi' my bonnie Meg,
Mair happy than a prince could be,
Thou placed thee by her other leg,
An' watched her wi' a jealous ee.

An' then at ony start or flare,
Thou wad'st hae worried furiouslye;
While I was forced to curse an' swear,
Afore thou wad'st forbidden be.

Yet wad she clasp thy towzy paw;
Thy gruesome grips were never skaithly;
An' thou than her hast been mair true,
An' truer than the friend that gae thee.

Ah me! o' fashion, self, an' pride,
Mankind hae read me sic a lecture;
But yet it's a' in part repaid
By thee, my faithful, grateful Hector!

O'er past imprudence, oft alane
I've shed the saut an' silent tear;
Then sharin' a' my grief an' pain,
My poor auld friend came snoovin' near.

For a' the days we've sojourned here,
An' they've been neither fine nor few,
That thought possest thee year to year,
That a' my griefs arase frae you.

Wi' waesome face an' hingin' head,
Thou wad'st hae pressed thee to my knee;
While I thy looks as weel could read,
As thou had'st said in words to me;

"O my dear master, dinna greet;
What hae I ever done to vex thee?
See here I'm cowrin' at your feet;
Just take my life, if I perplex thee.

"For a' my toil, my wee drap meat
Is a' the wage I ask of thee;
For whilk I'm oft obliged to wait
Wi' hungry wame an' patient ee.

"Whatever wayward course ye steer;
Whatever sad mischance o'ertake ye;
Man, here is ane will hald ye dear!
Man, here is ane will ne'er forsake ye!"

Yes, my puir beast, though friends me scorn,
Whom mair than life I valued dear;
An' thraw me out to fight forlorn,
Wi' ills my heart do hardly bear.

While I hae thee to bear a part—
My health, my plaid, an' heezle rung,—
I'll scorn the unfeeling haughty heart,
The saucy look, and slanderous tongue.

Some friends, by pop'lar envy swayed,
Are ten times waur than ony fae;
My heart was theirs, an' to them laid
As open as the light o' day.

I feared my ain, but had nae dread,
That I for loss o' theirs should mourn;
Or that when luck an' favour fled,
Their friendship wad injurious turn.

But He who feeds the ravens young,
Lets naething pass he disna see;
He'll sometime judge o' right an' wrang,
An' aye provide for you an' me.

An' hear me, Hector, thee I'll trust,
As far as thou hast wit an' skill;
Sae will I ae sweet lovely breast,
To me a balm for every ill.

To these my trust shall ever turn,
While I have reason truth to scan;
But ne'er beyond my mother's son,
To aught that bears the shape o' man.—

I ne'er could thole thy cravin' face,
Nor when ye pattit on my knee;
Though in a far an' unco place,
I've whiles been forced to beg for thee.

Even now I'm in my master's power,
Where my regard may scarce be shown;
But ere I'm forced to gie thee o'er,
When thou art auld an' senseless grown,

I'll get a cottage o' my ain,
Some wee bit cannie, lonely biel',
Where thy auld heart shall rest fu' fain,
An' share wi' me my humble meal.

Thy post shall be to guard the door
Wi' gousty bark, whate'er betides;
Of cats an' hens to clear the floor,
An' bite the flaes that vex thy sides.

When my last bannock's on the hearth,
Of that thou sanna want thy share;
While I hae house or hauld on earth,
My Hector shall hae shelter there.

An' should grim death thy noddle save,
Till he has made an' end o' me;
Ye'll lye a wee while on the grave
O' ane wha aye was kind to thee.

There's nane alive will miss me mair;
An' though in words thou canst not wail,
On a' the claes thy master ware,
I ken thou'lt smell an' wag thy tail.

If e'er I'm forced wi' thee to part,
Which will be sair against my will;
I'll sometimes mind thy honest heart,
As lang as I can climb a hill.

Come, my auld towzy, trusty friend,
Let's speel to Queensb'ry's lofty height:
All warldly cares we'll leave behind,
An' onward look to days more bright.

While gazing o'er the Lawland dales,
Despondence on the breeze shall flee;
An' muses leave their native vales
To scale the clouds wi' you an' me.

May of the Moril Glen.

I will tell you of ane wondrous tale,
As ever was told by man,
Or ever was sung by minstrel meet
Since this base world began:—

It is of ane May, and ane lovely May,
That dwelt in the Moril Glen,
The fairest flower of mortal frame,
But a devil amongst the men;

For nine of them sticket themselves for love,
And ten louped in the main,
And seven-and-thirty brake their hearts,
And never loved women again.

For ilk ane trowit she was in love,
And ran wodde for a while—
There was siccan language in every look,
And a speire in every smile.

And she had seventy scores of ewes,
That blett o'er dale and down,
On the bonnie braid lands of the Moril Glen.
And these were all her own;

And she had stotts, and sturdy steers,
And blithsome kids enew,
That danced as light as gloaming flies
Out through the falling dew.

And this May she had a snow-white bull,
The dread of the hail countrye,
And three-and-thretty good milk kye,
To bear him companye.

And she had geese and goslings too,
And ganders of muckil din,
And peacocks, with their gaudy trains,
And hearts of pride within;

And she had cocks with curled kaims,
And hens, full crouse and glad,
That chanted in her own stack-yard,
And cackillit and laid like mad.

But where her minnie gat all that gear
And all that lordly trim,
The Lord in heaven he knew full well,
But nobody knew but him;

For she never yielded to mortal man,
To prince, nor yet to king—
She never was given in holy church,
Nor wedded with ane ring:

So all men wist, and all men said;
But the tale was in sore mistime,
For a maiden she could hardly be,
With a daughter in beauty's prime.

But this bonnie May, she never knew
A father's kindly claim;
She never was bless'd in holy church,
Nor christen'd in holy name.

But there she lived an earthly flower
Of beauty so supreme.
Some fear'd she was of the mermaid's brood,
Come out of the salt sea faeme.

Some said she was found in a fairy ring,
And born of the fairy queen;
For there was a rainbow behind the moon
That night she first was seen.

Some said her mother was a witch,
Come frae ane far countrye;
Or a princess loved by a weird warlock
In a land beyond the sea.

O there are doings here below
That mortal ne'er should ken;
For there are things in this fair world
Beyond the reach of men!

Ae thing most sure and certain was—
For the bedesmen told it me—
That the knight who coft the Moril Glen
Ne'er spoke a word but three.

And the masons who biggit that wild ha' house
Ne'er spoke word good nor ill;
They came like a dream, and pass'd away
Like shadows o'er the hill.

They came like a dream, and pass'd away
Whither no man could tell;
But they ate their bread like Christian men,
And drank of the crystal well.

And whenever man said word to them,
They stay'd their speech full soon;
For they shook their heads, and raised their hands,
And look'd to Heaven aboon.

And the lady came—and there she 'bade
For mony a lonely day;
But whether she bred her bairn to God
To read but and to pray—

There was no man wist, though all men guess'd
And guess'd with fear and dread;
But oh she grew ane virgin rose,
To seemly womanheid!

And no man could look on her face,
And eyne that beamed so clear,
But felt a stang gang through his heart,
Far sharper than a spear;

It was not like ane prodde or pang
That strength could overwin,
But like ane red hot gaud of iron
Reeking his heart within.

So that aroond the Moril Glen
Our brave young men did lie,
With limbs as lydder, and as lythe,
As duddis hung out to dry.

And aye the tears ran down in streams
Ower cheeks right woe-begone;
And aye they gasped, and they gratte,
And thus made piteous moan:

"Alake that I had ever been born,
Or dandelit on the knee;
Or rockit in ane cradle bed,
Beneath a mother's ee!

"Oh! had I died before my cheek
To woman's breast had lain,
Then had I ne'er for woman's love
Endured this burning pain!

"For love is like the fiery flame
That quivers through the rain,
And love is like the pang of death
That splits the heart in twain.

"If I had loved earthly thing,
Of earthly blithesomeness,
I might have been beloved again,
And bathed in earthly bliss.

"But I have loved ane freakish fay
Of frowardness and sin,
With heavenly beauty on the face,
And heart of stone within.

"O, for the gloaming calm of death
To close my mortal day—
The last benighting heave of breath,
That rends the soul away!"

But word's gone east, and word's gone west,
'Mong high and low degree,
Quhile it went to the King upon the throne,
And ane wrothful man was he.—

"What!" said the king, "and shall we sit
In sackeloth mourning sad,
Quhile all mine lieges of the land
For ane young quean run mad?

"Go saddle me my milk-white steed,
Of true Megaira brode;
I will go and see this wondrous dame,
And prove her by the rode.

"And if I find her elfin queen,
Or thing of fairy kind,
I will burn her into ashes small,
And sift them on the wind!"

The king hath chosen fourscore knights,
All busked gallantlye,
And he is away to the Moril Glen,
As fast as he can dree.

And when he came to the Moril Glen,
Ae morning fair and clear,
This lovely May on horseback rode
To hunt the fallow deer.

Her palfrey was of snowy hue,—
A pale unearthy thing
That revell'd over hill and dale,
Like bird upon the wing.

Her screen was like a net of gold,
That dazzled as it flew;
Her mantle was of the rainbow's red,
Her rail of its bonny blue.

A golden comb with diamonds bright,
Her seemly virgin crown,
Shone like the new moon's lady light
O'er cloud of amber brown.

The lightning that shot from her eyne,
Flicker'd like elfin brand;
It was sharper nor the sharpest spear
In all Northumberland.

The hawk that on her bridle arm
Outspread his pinions blue,
To keep him steady on the perch
As his loved mistress flew.

Although his een shone like the gleam
Upon ane sable sea,
Yet to the twain that ower them beam'd,
Compared they could not be.

Like carry ower the morning sun
That shimmers to the wind,
So flew her locks upon the gale,
And streamed afar behind.

The king he wheeled him round about,
And calleth to his men,
"Yonder she comes, this weirdly witch,
This spirit of the glen!

"Come, rank your master up behind,
This serpent to belay;
I'll let you hear me put her down
In grand polemic way."

Swift came the maid ower strath and stron—
Nae dantonit dame was she—
Until the king her path withstood,
In might and majestye.

The virgin cast on him a look,
With gay and graceful air,
As on some thing below her note,
That ought not to have been there.

The king, whose belt was like to burst,
With speeches most divine,
Now felt ane throbbing of the heart,
And quaking of the spine.

And aye he gasped for his breath,
And gaped in dire dismay,
And waved his arm, and smote his breast;
But word he could not say.

The spankie grewis they scowr'd the dale,
The dun-deer to restrain;
The virgin gave her steed the rein,
And followed might and main.

"Go bring her back," the king he cried;
"This reifery must not be:
Though you should bind her hands and feet,
Go bring her back to me."

The deer she flew, the garf and grew
They follow'd hard behind;
The milk-white palfrey brush'd the dew
Far fleeter nor the wind.

But woe betide the lords and knights,
That taiglit in the dell!
For though with whip and spur they plied,
Full far behind they fell.

They look'd outowre their left shoulders,
To see what they might see,
And there the king in fit of love,
Lay spurring on the lea.

And aye he battered with his feet,
And rowted with despair,
And pulled the grass up by the roots,
And flang it on the air!

"What ails, what ails my royal liege?
Such grief I do deplore."
"O I'm bewitched," the king replied,
"And gone for evermore!

"Go bring her back—go bring her back—
Go bring her back to me;
For I must either die of love,
Or own that dear ladye!

"That god of love out through my soul
Hath shot his arrows keen;
And I am enchanted through the heart,
The liver, and the spleen."

The deer was slain; the royal train
Then closed the virgin round,
And then her fair and lily hands
Behind her back were bound.

But who should bind her winsome feet?—
That bred such strife and pain,
That sixteen brave and belted knights
Lay gasping on the plain.

And when she came before the king,
Ane ireful earle was he;
Saith he, "Dame, you must be my love,
Or burn beneath ane tree.

"For I am so sore in love with thee,
I cannot go nor stand;
And thinks thou nothing to put down
The King of fair Scotland?"

"No, I can ne'er be love to thee,
Nor any lord thou hast;
For you are married men each one,
And I a maiden chaste.

"But here I promise, and I vow
By Scotland's king and crown,
Who first a widower shall prove,
Shall claim me as his own."

The king hath mounted his milk-white steed,—
One word he said not more,—
And he is away from the Moril Glen,
As ne'er rode king before.

He sank his rowels to the naife,
And scour'd the muir and dale;
He held his bonnet on his head,
And louted to the gale,

Till wives ran skreighing to the door,
Holding their hands on high;
They never saw king in love before,
In such extremitye.

And every lord and every knight
Made off his several way,
All galloping as they had been mad,
Withoutten stop or stay.

But there was never such dool and pain
In any land befell;
For there is wickedness in man,
That grieveth me to tell.

There was one eye and one alone,
Beheld the deeds were done;
But the lovely queen of fair Scotland
Ne'er saw the morning sun;

And seventy-seven wedded dames,
As fair as e'er were born,
The very pride of all the land,
Were dead before the morn.

Then there was nought but mourning weeds,
And sorrow and dismay;
While burial met with burial still,
And jostled by the way.

And graves were howkit in green kirkyards,
And howkit deep and wide;
While bedlars swairfit for very toil,
The comely corps to hide.

The graves with their unseemly jaws,
Stood gaping day and night
To swallow up the fair and young;—
It was ane grievous sight!

And the bonny May of the Moril Glen
Is weeping in despair,
For she saw the hills of fair Scotland
Could be her home nae mair.

Then there were chariots came o'er night,
As silent and as soon
As shadow of ane little cloud
In the wan light of the moon.

Some said they came out of the rock,
And some out of the sea;
And some said they were sent from hell,
To bring that fair ladye.

When the day sky began to frame
The grizly eastern fell,
And the little wee bat was bound to seek
His dark and eery cell,

The fairest flower of mortal frame
Pass'd from the Moril Glen;
And ne'er may such a deadly eye
Shine amongst Christian men!

In seven chariots, gilded bright,
The train went o'er the fell,
All wrapt within ane shower of hail;
Whither no man could tell;

But there was a ship in the Firth of Forth,
The like ne'er sailed the faeme,
For no man of her country knew,
Her colours or her name.

Her mast was made of beaten gold,
Her sails of the silken twine,
And a thousand pennons stream'd behind,
And trembled o'er the brine.

As she lay mirror'd in the main,
It was a comely view,
So many rainbows round her play'd
With every breeze that blew.

And the hailstone shroud it rattled loud,
Right over ford and fen,
And swathed the flower of the Moril Glen
From eyes of sinful men;

And the hailstone shroud it wheel'd and row'd,
As wan as death unshriven,
Like dead cloth of ane angel grim,
Or winding sheet of heaven.

It was a fearsome sight to see
Toil through the morning gray,
And whenever it reach'd the comely ship,
She set sail and away.

She set her sail before the gale,
As it began to sing,
And she heaved and rocked down the tide,
Unlike an earthly thing.

The dolphins fled out of her way
Into the ereeks of Fife,
And the blackguard seals they yowlit for dread,
And swam for death and life.

But aye the ship, the bonny ship,
Outowre the green wave flew,
Swift as the solan on the wing,
Or terrified sea-mew;

No billow breasted on her prow,
Nor levelled on the lee;
She seem'd to sail upon the air
And never touch the sea.

And away, and away went the bonny ship,
Which man never more did see;
But whether she went to heaven or hell,
Was ne'er made known to me.

MADOR OF THE MOOR.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE story contained in "Mador of the Moor" is soon told. A minstrel of that name has seen a beautiful rustic girl, called Ila Moore; and having, of course, fallen in love with her, establishes himself by dint of much liveliness and effrontery as the guest of her churlish father, whose doors were seldom opened to such visitants. The minstrel's affection is reciprocated, but after winning the young girl's heart, he disappears. This, however, is not her whole affliction, for Ila Moore becomes a mother; and amidst the scorn with which her shame is visited, she is anxious to find the father of her infant boy, and travels to Stirling for that purpose, Mador having informed her that he is a minstrel attached to the court: but after days of anxious inquiry and rude repulse, she can find no one within the lordly circle to whom the name or title of "Mador of the Moor" is known. At last she applies to the Abbot of Dunfermline, and reveals to him the cause of her hapless quest; and from a ring on her finger, which had been given to her by her lover, the good priest suspects that her betrayer is a more important personage than a mere wandering minstrel. He enters the palace, and rehearses her simple story before the sovereign and the attendant lords, but without the mention of names, while the king, indignant at the conduct of her heartless deceiver, declares, that be he whoever he may, he shall either do her justice, or suffer the penalty of banishment. The abbot then brings the matter to a crisis by naming the parties—and the appeal, like that of "Thou art the man," brings home to the king the sense of his guilt, and the necessity of reparation. It was no other than himself who had been "Mador of the Moor," while rambling disguised in quest of adventures; and Ila's delight in finding her lover, is equalled by her astonishment in discovering that he is no other than the king of fair Scotland, and ready to fulfil the vows which he had pledged to her as an obscure minstrel. They are forthwith joined in wedlock by the good abbot, and the curtain falls.

Such is the narrative of this poem of five cantos; and as a tale, it is not only scanty of incident, but loosely put together, and confusedly told. Few of his contemporaries could excel the Ettrick Shepherd in telling a short story, and of this, his ballads as well as his prose works give abundant evidence. But when he attempted an epic of several cantos, or a three-volume novel, the continuity of such a lengthened effort wearied him, and the variety of characters bewildered him, so that after losing his way more than once, and confounding one personage with another, he was glad to rush to the close by whatever way he could reach it. But for all this, the circumstances, first of his very defective training, and afterwards of his busy and precarious career of authorship, may be received as sufficient apology. It would have been better, however, for his comfort, as well as for his fame, if he had contented himself with the unostentatious path in which he so especially excelled, and left the writing of more bulky productions to the scholarly well-practised authors with whom he could not hope successfully to compete.

In "Mador of the Moor," this inability for long-continued application, and the nice symmetrical construction of a tale of deep plot and many incidents, becomes evident to every reader. The fact of Robert II., King of Scotland, having married Elizabeth Muir, a gentlewoman and nothing higher, was enough in the Shepherd's eyes to give probability to his story; and the success of Sir Walter Scott in the "Lady of the Lake" seemed to make the adventures of a wandering king in disguise a happy subject for poetry. Might he not also equal or even surpass the great minstrel in his own choice theme?—an ambition which Hogg on more than one occasion betrayed, and by which, on this occasion, he was allured from his own vantage ground, into an untried path of difficulty and danger. Accordingly, in his "Mador," he has exaggerated the chief features of the "Lady of the Lake," until they have grown into a caricature. His Ila Moore, instead of being of a half-noble race, like Elizabeth Muir of the house of Rowallen, is the daughter of a low country churl; and instead of being elevated above her humble rank by her innate worth and nobleness, so as to be fit to fill a throne, is nothing more than an ordinary rural belle, a coquette, and ultimately something worse. Mador also, instead of being a king in disguise, in whose demeanour the dignity of royalty should appear in spite of yeomanly habiliments, is not only a mere minstrel, but a very vulgar fiddler—one who, though he passes himself off as a court minstrel, has not humour enough for the humbler office of a court jester or buffoon. He is neither the Fitz-James of Sir Walter Scott, nor even the Gaberlunzie Man of James V. He has not noble bearing enough to deter Ila's father from attempting to break his head with a cudgel, nor manhood enough to save his throat from the gripe of an angry rival, who overthrows and nearly strangles him, and from whom he is glad to escape by flight. What could poetry effect in behalf of such a hero and such a heroine?

The chief merits of "Mador of the Moor" are to be sought, not certainly in the story, which, strictly judged, is an absolute failure, but in the beautiful sentiments and rich descriptions of which it is the vehicle. The poetry not only excuses the tale, but

invests it with reality and attractiveness. It is written in the Spenserian stanza, which, however rich and resounding, most poets feel to be a heavy incumbrance; but with Hogg, it goes trippingly and gracefully along, as if it were his natural pace. Thus gracefully ranging, it unfolds in its course every variety of scenery, every aspect of light and shade, and every change of sentiment, so that when the reader pauses, it is not for weariness, but in admiration and delight. And here, indeed, the Ettrick Shepherd has been true to his proper vocation, which was that of a descriptive rather than an epic poet; and while we are arrested by these beautiful pictures that pass in such close succession, we scarcely inquire what is the story, or indeed whether there is a story or not. Where there is so much in this way to commend, it is difficult to particularize, and we can only allude to a few of these incidents which strike us as among the happiest characteristics of the work. The hunt, that occupies so large a portion of the first canto, and which was probably suggested by the similar opening in the "Lady of the Lake," is not inferior to its prototype. Then succeed the rustic fashions of a farmer's home in the mansion of Kincraigy, its rude banquets and the equally rude contentment of its inmates, and the sports, joys, and humours of rural life, to which the Shepherd himself had been so much inured, and which he could portray with such fidelity and zeal. And full of sweet pathos and maternal tenderness is Ila's song of helplessness over her child of shame, which she only loves the more because he is worse than fatherless, and the cause of her constant persecution—the song, of which the plaintive burden is,

"Thy father's far away, thy mother all too young!"—

her adventurous journey in quest of the mysterious and unfaithful minstrel; her midnight sojourn in the lonely hut; the thunder-storm that roars and flashes over and around it; and the elvish malignant forms that emerge from the darkness, looking at her with fiendish grin, and watching to carry off her infant—these homely popular superstitions of the country, but elevated by poetry into their full form and grandeur, alternated with the terrible and sublime in nature, combine to form a picture which only genius could conceive, and the hand of a master execute. And more touching and impressive still is that description given by the palmer of a bridal, at which the lady on her way to the altar is confronted by the form of the infant she had murdered, who upbraids her for her crime, and drives her a maniac into the wilderness. It is upon such striking individual incidents that occur throughout the work, and the beauty of its descriptions, that the charm of "Mador of the Moor" depends, rather than upon the interest of the plot or the skilful construction of the narrative.

MADOR OF THE MOOR.[1]

INTRODUCTION.

Thou Queen of Caledonia's mountain floods,
Theme of a thousand gifted bards of yore;
Majestic wanderer of the wilds and woods,
That lovest to circle cliff and mountain hoar,
And with the winds to mix thy kindred roar,
Startling the shepherd of the Grampian glen;
Rich are the vales that bound thy eastern shore,
And fair thy upland dales to human ken;
But scarcely are thy springs known to the sons of men.

Oh that some spirit at the midnight noon
Aloft would bear me, middle space, to see
Thy thousand branches gleaming to the moon
By shadowy hill, gray rock, and fairy lea;
Thy gleesome elves disporting merrily
In glimmering circles by the lonely dell,
Or by the sacred fount, or haunted tree,
Where bowed the saint, as hoary legends tell,
And Superstition's last, wild, thrilling visions dwell!

To Fancy's eye the ample scene is spread;
The yellow moonbeam sleeps on hills of dew,
On many an everlasting pyramid
That bathes its gray head in celestial blue.
These o'er thy cradle stand the guardians true,
The eternal bulwarks of the land and thee,
And evermore thy lullaby renew
To howling winds and storms that o'er thee flee:
All hail, ye battlements of ancient liberty!

There the dark raven builds his dreary home;
The eagle o'er his eyrie raves aloud;
The brindled fox around thee loves to roam,
And ptarmigans, the inmates of the cloud;
And when the summer flings her dappled shroud
O'er reddening moors, and wilds of softened gray,
The youthful swain, unfashioned, unendowed,
The brocket and the lamb may round thee play:
These thy first guests alone, thou fair, majestic Tay!

[1] The following poem is partly founded on an incident recorded in the Scottish annals of the fourteenth century. The alteration in the lady's name, which was Elizabeth Moore, was necessary on account of the rythm.

But bear me, Spirit of the gifted eye,
Far on thy pinions eastward to the main,
O'er garish glens and straths of every dye,
Where oxen low, and waves the yellow grain:
Where beetling cliffs o'erhang the belted plain
In spiral forms, fantastic, wild, and riven;
Where swell the woodland choir and maiden's strain,
As forests bend unto the breeze of even,
And in the flood beneath wave o'er a downward heaven!

Then hold thy visioned course along the skies,
O'er fertile valley bounded by the sea,
Girdled by silver baldrick, which now vies
In broadness with the ocean's majesty;
Where pleasure smiles, and laughing luxury,
And traffic bustles out the live-long day:
Where brazen keels before the billows flee—
Is that the murmuring rill of mountain gray?
Is that imperial flood the wildered Grampian Tay?

Far on thy fringed borders, west away,
Queen of green Albyn's rivers, let me roam,
And mark thy graceful windings as I stray
When drowsy day-light seeks her curtained dome.
Fain would a weary wanderer from his home,
The wayward Minstrel of a southland dale,
Sing of thy mountain birth, thy billowy tomb,
And legends old that linger in thy vale;
To friendship and to thee, is due the simple tale.

Old Caledonia! pathway of the storm
That o'er thy wilds resistless sweeps along,
Though clouds and snows thy sterile hills deform,
Thou art the land of freedom and of song.
Land of the eagle fancy, wild and strong!
Land of the loyal heart and valiant arm!
Though southern pride and luxury may wrong
Thy mountain honours, still my heart shall warm
At thy unquestioned weir and songs of magic charm.

O, I might tell where ancient cities stood;
And I might sing of battles lost and won;
Of royal obsequies, and halls of blood,
And daring deeds by dauntless warrior done.
Since Scotland's crimson page was first begun,
Tay was the scene of actions great and high:
But aye when from the echoing hills I run,
My froward harp refuses to comply;
The nursling of the wild, the Mountain Bard am I.

I cannot sing of Longearty and Hay,
Nor long on deeds of death and danger dwell;
Of old Dunsinnan towers, or Birnam gray,
Where Canmore battled and the villain fell.
But list! I will an ancient story tell,
A tale of meikle woe and mystery;
Of sore mishaps that an old sire befell,
Wise Dame, and Minstrel of full high degree,
And visions of dismay, unfitting man to see.

And thou shalt hear of maid, whose melting eye
Spoke to the heart what tongue could never say—
A maid, right gentle, frolicsome, and sly,
And blythe as lambkin on a morn of May;
Whose auburn locks when waving to the day,
And lightsome form of sweet simplicity,
Stole many a fond unweeting heart away,
And held those hearts in pleasing slavery;—
Woe that such flower should e'er by lover blighted be!

But ween not thou that nature's simple bard
Can e'er unblemished character define;
True to his faithful monitor's award,
He paints her glories only as they shine.
Of men all pure, and maidens all divine,
Expect not thou his wild-wood lay to be;
But those whose virtues and defects combine,
Such as in erring man we daily see—
The child of failings born, and scathed humanity.

CANTO FIRST.

The Hunting.

ARGUMENT.

God prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all!
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy Chase befall.
To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborn
The hunting of that day.

Haste, ranger, to the Athol mountains blue;
Unleash the hounds, and let the bugle sing!
The thousand traces in the morning dew,
The bounding deer, the black-cock on the wing,
Bespeak the route of Scotland's gallant king:
The bearded rock shouts to the desert hoar;
Haste, ranger!—all the mountain echoes ring;
From cairn of Bruar to the dark Glen-More,
The forest's in a howl, and all is wild uproar.

Oh, many a gallant hart that time was slain,
And many a roebuck foundered in the glen!
The gor-cock beat the shivering winds in vain;
The antlered rover sought his widowed den;
Even birds that ne'er had seen the forms of men,
But roosted careless on the desert doone,
An easy mark to ruthless archer's ken,
No more they whirr and crow at dawning boon,
Far on their grizzled heights, contiguous to the moon.

Where'er the chase to dell or valley neared,
There for the royal train the feast was laid;
There was the monarch's light pavilion reared;

There flowed the wine, and much in glee was said
Of lady's form, and blooming mountain maid;
And many a fair was toasted to the brim:
But knight and squire a languishing betrayed
When *one* was named, whose eye made diamonds dim:
The king looked sad and sighed; no sleep that night for him!

The morning rose, but scarce they could discern
When night gave in her sceptre to the day,
The clouds of heaven were moored so dark and dern,
And wrapt the forest in a shroud of gray.
Man, horse, and hound, in listless languor lay,
For the wet rack traversed the mountain's brow:
But, long ere night, the monarch stole away;
His courtiers searched, and raised the loud halloo,
But well they knew their man, and made not much ado.

Another day came on, another still,
And aye the clouds their drizzly treasures shed;
The pitchy mist hung moveless on the hill,
And hooded every pine-tree's reverend head.
The heavens seemed sleeping on their mountain bed;
The straggling roes mistimed their noontide den,
And strayed the forest, belling for the dead,
Started at every rustle—paused, and then
Sniffed, whistling in the wind, and bounded to the glen.

The king was lost, and much conjecture past;
At length the morning rose in lightsome blue,
Far to the west her pinken veil she cast;
Up rose the fringed sun, and softly threw
A golden tint along the moorland dew:
The mist had sought the winding vales, and lay
A slumbering ocean of the softest hue,
Where mimic rainbows bent in every bay,
And thousand islets smiled amid the watery way.

The steeps of proud Ben-Glow the nobles scaled,
For there they heard their monarch's bugle yell;
First on the height the beauteous morn he hailed,
And rested, wondering, on the heather-bell.
The amber blaze that tipt the moor and fell,
The fleecy clouds that rolled afar below,
The hounds' impatient whine, the bugle's swell,
Raised in his breast a more than wonted glow:
The nobles found him pleased, nor farther strove to know.

The driven circle narrowed on the heath,
Close, and more close, the deer were bounding by;
Upon the bow-string lies the shaft of death;
Breathless impatience burns in every eye;
At once a thousand winged arrows fly;
The greyhound up the glen outstrips the wind;
At once the slow-hound's music rends the sky,
The hunter's whoop and hallo cheers behind;
Halloo! away they speed swift as the course of mind.

There rolled the bausined hind adown the linn,
Transfixed by arrow from the Border bow;
There the poor roe-deer quakes the cliff within,
The silent greyhound watching close below.
But yonder far the chestnut rovers go,
O'er hill, o'er dale, they mock thy hounds and thee;
Cheer, hunter, cheer! unbend thy cumbrous bow,
Bayard and blood-hound now thy hope must be,
Or soon they gain the steeps, and pathless woods of Dee.

Halloo! o'er hill and dale the slot is warm!
To every cliff the bugle lends a bell;
On to the northward peals the loud alarm,
And aye the brocket and the sorel fell:
But flying still before the mingled yell,
The gallant herd outspeeds the troubled wind;
Their rattling antlers brush the birken dell;
Their haughty eyes the rolling tear-drops blind;
But onward still they speed, and look not once behind.

The Tilt is vanished on the upland gray,
The Tarf is dwindled to a foaming rill;
But many a hound lay gasping by the way,
Bathed in the stream, or stretched upon the hill.
The cooling brook with burning jaws they swill,
Nor once will deign to scent the tainted ground:
The herd has crossed Breriach's gulfing gill,
The Athol forest's formidable bound,
And in the Garcharye a last retreat has found.

One hound alone has crossed the dreary height,
The deep-toned Jowler, ever staunch and true.
The chase was o'er; but long ere fell the night,
Full thirty hinds those gallant hunters slew,
Of every age and kind; the drivers drew
Their quarry on behind by ford and lea:
But never more shall eye of monarch view
So wild a scene of mountain majesty
As Scotland's king beheld from the tall peaks of Dee.

On gray Macduich's utmost verge he stood,
The loftiest cone of all that desert dun:
The seas afar were streamered o'er with blood;
Dark forests waved, and winding waters run;
For nature glowed beneath the evening sun;
The western shadows darkening every dale,
Where dens of gloom, the sight of man to shun,
Lay shrouded in impervious magic veil;
While, o'er them poured the rays of light so lovely pale.

But oh, what bard could sing the onward sight!
The piles that frowned, the gulfs that yawned beneath
Downward a thousand fathoms from the height,
Grim as the caverns in the land of death!
Like mountains shattered in the Eternal's wrath,
When fiends their banners 'gainst his reign unfurled;
A grisly wilderness, a land of scathe;

Rocks upon rocks in dire confusion hurled,
A rent and formless mass, the rubbish of a world.

As if by lost pre-eminence abased,
Hill behind hill erected locks of gray,
And every misty morion was upraised,
To speak its farewell to the God of Day.
When tempests rave along their polar way,
Not closer rear the billows of the deep,
Shining with silver foam, and maned with spray,
As up the mid-way heaven they war and sweep,
Then, foiled and chafed to rage, roll down the broken steep.

First died upon the peaks the golden hue,
And o'er them spread a beauteous purple screen;
Then rose a shade of pale cerulean blue,
Softening the hills and hazy vales between.
Deeper and deeper grew the magic scene,
As darker shades of the night-heaven came on:
No star along the firmament was seen,
But solemn majesty prevailed alone
Around the brows of Eve, upon her Grampian throne.

Steep the descent and rugged was the way
By which the monarch and his knights came down,
And oft they groped and stumbled on the brae;
For far below, on vale of heather brown,
The tents were reared, and fires of evening shone.
The mountain sounds had perished in the gloom,
All save the unwearied Jowler's swelling tone,
That bore to trembling stag the sounds of doom,
While every cave of Night rolled back the breathing boom.

The impassioned huntsman wended up the brae,
And loud the order of desistance bawled;
But aye, as louder waxed his tyrant's say,
Louder and fiercer, Jowler, unappalled,
Across the glen, along the mountain brawled,
Unpractised he to part till blood was seen—
Though sore by precipice and darkness galled,
He turned his dewlap to the starry sheen,
And howled in furious tone, with yelp and bay between.

Well known that spot, once graced by sovereign's sleep,
Still bears it the memorial of his name;
The silver torrent played his vesper deep,
The mountain plover sung his loud acclaim.
Inured to toil, and battle's deadly flame,
The Stuart rose the son of health and might:
Ah! how unlike the bland voluptuous frame
In this unthrifty age, that takes delight
To doze in qualms by day, and revel out the night.

The night had journeyed up the dark blue steep,
And leaned upon the casement of the sky,
Smiling serenely o'er a world in sleep,
At millions of her wandering elfins sly,
Harassing helpless mortals as they lie
With dreams and fantasies of endless train;
With tantalizing sweets that mock the eye;
With startling horror, and with visions vain,
And every thrilling trance of pleasure and of pain.

In mantle wrapt, and stretched on flowery heath,
She saw the King of Scotland weary lie;
So deep his slumber, that the hand of death
Arrests not more the reasoning faculty.
Yet was his fancy rapt in passion high:
He toiled with visions of a wayward dream;
Quivered his limbs, his bosom broke the sigh,
He clasped the yielding heath, and named a name—
He would not for his crown to noble's ear it came!

The heavenly guardian of the royal head,
That rules events and elements at will,
Unused in wilderness to watch his bed,
Or spread his sheltering pinion on the hill;
Unrife in circumstance foreboding ill,
Yet trembled for some danger lingering near.
What gathering sound comes nigher, nigher still!
Why does the wakening hound turn up his ear,
Then start with shortened bark, and bristle all with fear!

Fast gains the alarm—the nobles, half awake,
Restrain their breathing mindless where they lie;
The sleepy ranger starts from out the brake,
With mouth wide open and unvisioned eye;
Knight, squire, and hind, in one direction fly,
Mixed with the hounds that loud in couples bay,
All to the downward burn that sounded by,
For there arose the dubious, frantic bray,
That raised the dreamer's eye, and all that loud affray.

Oh, smile not at the confluent midnight scene,
The blazing torch, the looks of wild dismay!—
It was no angry spirit of the glen,
No murderous clansmen mixed in red array:
There stood the monarch of the wild at bay,
The impetuous Jowler howling at his brow,
His cheeks all drenched with brine, his antlers gray
Moving across the cliff, majestic, slow,
Like living fairy trees of blenched and leafless bough.

With ruthless shaft they pierced his heaving breast,
The baited, thirsty Jowler laps his blood;
The royal hunter his brave hound caressed,
Lauded his zeal and spirit unsubdued;
While the staunch victor, of approval proud,
Rolled his brown back upon the prostrate slain,
Capered around in playful whelpish mood,
As if unspent by all his toil and pain,
Then licked his crimson flue, and looked to the hills again.

For three long days the deer were driven afar,
And many a herd was thinned and sore bespent:
Through dark Glen-Avin, and the woods of Mar,
Hart, hind, and roe, in trembling trails were blent.
Still in the wild remained the royal tent;

One little bothy stood behind the lea,
Where oft at eve the king and nobles went
The setting sun and soaring erne to see,
Behind the dreadful cliffs that watch the springs of Dee.

One eve they sat all in a jocund row,
The cruel Knight of Souden he was one;
They noted horror staring on his brow,
His lip was quivering, and his colour gone!
And aye he looked the startled knights upon,
Then rolled his troubled glance along the hill.
"What moves thee?" said the king, in mildest tone:
He bowed his head, but held his silence still:
"What moves my gallant knight? Speak Souden, art thou ill?"

"My sovereign liege, forgiveness I implore;
Strange recollections dim my palsied sight;
But this same dreary scene I've seen before,
Either in trance, or vision of the night.
Some dismal doom shall soon my honours blight;
I know these bodings fraught with woe to me:
It seems as demon dragged a deed to light,
That lies unfathomed even to destiny!"—
Oh, ne'er may leal man keep with murderer company!

No more he spoke that eve, as legends tell;
No orders issued to his page or groom;
But servitors, with trembling, marked full well
A wondrous face behind him in the gloom;
Of flame it seemed, yet nothing did illume;
Laughing revenge gleamed red in every line:
But how it entered the pavilioned room,
Or how it past, no mortal could divine;
A visitant it seemed from some unhallowed shrine!

Again the lowering clouds immure the hill;
Again the sportsmen stretch their limbs in rest;
To the lone bothy, by the sounding rill,
The king retired, its wildness pleased him best,
With his good knights to list the song and jest;
His ancient minstrel waiting at command,
Gilbert of Sheil, by all the land confest
A minstrel worthy by his king to stand,
And play his native airs, with sounding harp in hand.

That evening, called to sing, he framed a lay,—
A lay of such mysterious tendency,
It stole the listeners' reasoning powers away:
They dreamed not that they lay in moors of Dee,
But in some fairy isle amid the sea,
So well did Fancy mould her visions vain;
Bent was the minstrel's eye, and wild to see,
The whilst he poured the visionary strain;
Oh, ne'er shall Grampian echo murmur such again!

And when he ceased, the chords, with sighing tone,
On listeners' ears in soft vibrations fell;
They almost weened they heard the parting moan
Of some old reverend sire, and wished him well!—
On gospel faith, and superstition's spell,
The converse turned, and high the dispute ran:
And words were said unfitting bard to tell,
Unfitting tongue of poor despondent man,
Still prone to yearn and doubt o'er all he cannot scan.

To what unsaintly goal the words had borne,
Dubious conjecture only can portray;
Just in the blab of Souden's impious scorn
Entered a stranger guest in poor array:
His locks were thin, and bleached a silver gray;
His reverend beard across his girdle hung.
Each mind was carried, by resistless sway,
To the unearthly strain the minstrel sung:—
Blenched was the proudest cheek, and mute was every tongue!

He stood erect, but raised not up his eye,
Seeming to listen for expected sound;
But all was still as Night's solemnity,
Not even a sandal grazed upon the ground.
Transformed to breathing statues, all around
The nobles sat, nor wist they what to dread;
But every sense by hand unseen was bound,
On every valiant heart was chillness shed,
As to that wild had come a message from the dead.

At length to Scotland's monarch rose his look,
On whom he beckoned with commanding mien,
With manner that denial would not brook—
Then gliding forth he paused upon the green.
What the mysterious messenger could mean
No one would risk conjecture; all were still.
In converse close, the two were lingering seen
Across the lea, and down beside the rill,
Then seemed to vanish both in shadow of the hill.

And never more was seen the royal face
By Athol forest or the links of Dee!
Oh, why should haughty worm of human race
Presume to question Heaven's supremacy;
Or trow his God, alike unmoved, can see
To death exposed the monarch and the clown?
That night was done, by the supreme decree,
A deed that story scarce may dare to own—
By what unearthly hand, to all mankind unknown!

At midnight, strange disturbing sounds awoke
The drowsy slumberers on the tented heath:
It was no blast that on the mountain broke,
Nor bolised thunder wrapt in sable wrath;
Yet were they listening, with suspended breath,
To hear the rushing tumult once again:
It seemed to all the passing sounds of death,
Or angry spirits of the mountain reign,
Combined at midnight deep to clear their wild domain.

Six gallant yeomen rose, and, hand to hand,
Set forth the bothy's wild recess to gain;
Despising fate, and monarch's strict command,
That all should quiet at the tents remain:
They harboured fears that tongue could not explain.
Darkling and silent, midway on they past,
When power unseen their passage did restrain;

Each onward step they deemed would be their last,
And backward traced their path, unboastful and
aghast.

The morning came, in pall of sackcloth veiled;
The cliffs of Dee a sable vestment bound;
Then every squire and yeoman's spirit failed,
As slow approached a maimed and bleeding hound,
Sad herald of the dead! his every wound
Bespoke the desolation that was wrought.
Oh, ne'er may scene in Scottish glen be found
With wonder, woe, and death, so fully fraught;
So far beyond the pale of bounded mortal thought!

No knight walked forth to taste the morning air,
The bugle's echo slept within the hill;
And—O the blasting truth!—no cot was there;
No! not a vestige stood beside the rill.
Though trace of element, or human skill,
In all the fatal glen could not be found,
The ghastly forms, in prostrate guise and still,
Knight, page, and hound, lay scattered far around,
Deformed by many a stain, and deep unseemly wound.

The king was sought by many an anxious eye;—
No king was there!— Well might the wonder grow.
They rode—they searched the land afar and nigh—
He was not found, nor learned the tale of woe.
Hast thou not marked a lonely spot and low,
Where Moulin opes her bosom to the day,
O'er which the willow weeps and birches blow,
Where nine rude stones erect their frontlets gray?—
There the blasphemers lie, slain in mysterious way.

When nine long days were past, and all was o'er;
When round his nobles slain had closed the mould,
The king returned to Scotland's court once more,
And wondered at the tale his huntsmen told;
His speech revolted, and his blood ran cold,
As low he kneeled at good Saint Bothan's shrine.
Where he had been no tongue did e'er unfold.—
List to my tale!—if thou can'st nought divine,
A slow misfashioned mind, a moody soul is thine.

CANTO SECOND.

The Minstrel.

ARGUMENT.

There cam a fiddler here to play,
And oh, but he was jimp an' gay;
He staw the lassie's heart away,
An' made it a' his ain O.
For weel he kend the way O, the way O, the way O,
Weel he kend the way O, the lassie's love to gain O.

That time there lived upon the banks of Tay
A man of right ungainly courtesy;
Yet he was eident in his froward way,
And honest as a Highlander may be.
He was not man of rank, nor mean degree,
And loved his spouse, and child, as such became;
Yet oft would fret, and wrangle irefully,
Fastening on them of every ill the blame,
Nor list the loud defence of his unyielding dame.

She was unweeting, plump, and fair to see;
Dreadless of ills she ne'er before had seen;
Full of blithe jolliment and boisterous glee;
Yet was her home not well bedight or clean,
For, like the most of all her sex, I ween,
Much she devised, but little did conclude;
Much toil was lost, as if it ne'er had been.
Her tongue was fraught with matter wondrous crude,
And, in her own defence, most voluble and loud.

But oh, the lovely May,[1] their only child,
Was sweeter than the flower that scents the gale!
Her lightsome form, and look so soothing mild,
The loftiest minstrel song would much avail.
And she was cheerful, forwardsome, and hale;
And she could work the rich embroidery,
Or with her maidens bear the milking pail;
Yet, dight at beltane reel, you could espy
No lady in the land who with this May could vie.

And many a younker sighed her love to gain;
Her steps were haunted at the bught and pen;
But all their prayers and vows of love were vain,
Her choice was fixed on Albert of the Glen:
No youth was he, nor winsomest of men,
For he was proud, and full of envy's gall;
But what was lovelier to the damsel's ken,
He had wide lands, and servants at his call;
Her sire was liegeman bound, and held of him his all.

The beauteous May, to parents' will resigned,
Opposed not that which boded nothing ill;
It gave an ease and freedom to her mind,
And wish, the anxious interval to kill:
She listed wooer's tale with right good-will;
And she would jest, and smile, and heave the sigh;
Would torture whining youth with wicked skill,
Turn on her heel, then off like lightning fly,
Leaving the hapless wight resolved forthwith to die.

The rainbow's lovely in the eastern cloud;
The rose is beauteous on the bended thorn;
Sweet is the evening ray from purple shroud,
And sweet the orient blushes of the morn:
Sweeter than all, the beauties which adorn
The female form in youth and maiden bloom.
Oh, why should passion ever man suborn

[1] A May, in old Scottish ballads and romances, denotes a young lady, or a maiden, somewhat above the lower class.

To work the sweetest flower of Nature's doom,
And cast o'er all her joys a veil of cheerless gloom!

O fragile flower, that blossoms but to fade,
One slip recovery or recal defies!
Thou walk'st the dizzy verge with steps unstaid,
Fair as the habitants of yonder skies;
Like them, thou fallest never more to rise.
O fragile flower, for thee my heart's in pain!
Haply a world is his from mortal eyes,
Where thou mayest smile in purity again.
And shine in virgin bloom that ever shall remain.

The twentieth spring had breathed upon the flower,
Nor had that flower passed with the year away,
Since first the infant bloom of Ila Moore,
The flower of Athol, opened to the day.
Kincraigy was her home, that o'er the Tay
A prospect held of Nature's fairest scene;
Far mountains mixing with aerial gray,
Low golden-vested valleys stretched between,
And, far below the eye, broad flood and islet green.

The day was wet, the mist was on the moor.
Rested from labour husbandman and maid:
There came a stranger to Kincraigy's door,
Of goodly form, in minstrel garb arrayed;
Of braided silk his bulziement was made:
Short the entreatance he required to stay;
He tuned his viol, and with vehemence played;
Mistress and menial, maid and matron gray,
Soon mixed were on the floor, and frisked in wild affray.

The minstrel strained and twisted sore his face.
Beat with his heel, and twinkled with his eye,
But still, at every effort and grimace,
Louder and quicker rushed the melody:
The dancers round the floor in mazes fly,
With cheering whoop, and wheel, and caper wild;
The jolly dame did well her mettle ply:
Even old Kincraigy, of his spleen beguiled,
Turned his dark brow aside, softened his looks and smiled.

When supper on the ashen board was set,
The minstrel, all unasked, jocosely came,
Brought his old chair, and, without pause or let,
Placed it betwixt the maid and forthright dame.
They smiled, and asked his lineage and his name—
'Twas Mador of the Moor, a name renowned;
A kindred name with theirs, well known to fame—
A high-born name; but old Kincraigy frowned;
Such impudence in man, he weened, had not been found.

The last red embers on the hearth were spread,
But Mador still his antic tricks pursued;
The doors were closed, and all were bound to bed,
When, spite of old Kincraigy's angry mood,
The frantic hurlyburly was renewed:
His tongue grew mute, his face o'erspread with gloom;
Wild uproar raged resistless, unsubdued;
The younkers of the hamlet crowd the room,
And Mador's viol squeaks with rough and raging boom.

The dire misrule Kincraigy could not brook;
He saw distinction lost, and order spurned;
And, much displeased that his offended look
Was all unminded, high his anger burned.
Upon the rocket minstrel dark he turned,
And asked to whom such strains he wont to play?—
Oh! he had played to nobles now inurned;
And he had played in countries far away,
And to the gallant king that o'er them held the sway.

"Ay!" said Kincraigy, with malignant scowl,
Stroking his beard and writhing down his brow;
"I've heard our monarch was an arrant fool!
I weened it so, but knew it not till now.
But 'tis enough—his choice of such as you—
Great Heaven! to man what inconsistence clings,
To meanest of the species doomed to bow!
Had I one day o'er all created things,
The world should once be cleared of fiddlers and of kings!"

'Twas a hard jest, but Mador laughed it bye;
Across the strings his careless fingers strayed,
Till staunch Kincraigy, with unaltered eye,
Asked how, or where, he learned the scraping trade?
When those new jars to music came allayed?
And how it happ'd he in the line had thriven?
For sure, of all the fiddlers ever played,
Never was bow by such a novice driven,
Never were human ears by such discordance riven.

Go tell the monarch of his feelings cold;
Go tell the prince that he is lewd and vain;
Go tell the wrinkled maid that she is old;
The wretched miser of his ill-got gain;
But oh, in human kindness, spare the pain
That conscious excellence abased must feel!
It proves to wounded pride the deadliest bane;
The judgment it arraigns, and stamps the seal
Of *fool* with burning brand, which blood alone can heal.

The earliest winter hues of old Cairn-Gorm,
Schehallion when the clouds begin to lower,
Even the wan face of heaven before the storm,
Looked ne'er so stern as Mador of the Moor.
Most cutting sharp was his retort and sour,
And in offensive guise his bow he drew:
Kincraigy reddened, stepped across the floor,
Lifted his staff, and back indignant flew
To scathe the minstrel's pate, and baste him black and blue.

Had those to Mador known in royal hall,
(For well I ween he was not stranger there),
Beheld him crouching 'gainst that smoky wall,
His precious violin heaved high in air,
As guardian shield, the ireful blow to bear;

The blowzy dame holding with all her might;
An interceding maid so lovely fair;
Matron and peasant gaping with affright—
Oh, 'twas a scene of life might charm an anchorite!

'Twas not the flustered dame's inept rebuke,
'Twas not the cowering minstrel's perilous state,
'Twas beauteous Ila Moore's reproving look
That quelled her sire, and barred the work of fate.
With smile serene she led him to his seat,
Sat by his knee, and bade the minstrel play.
No word was heard of anger or debate,
So much may woman's eye our passions sway:
When beauty gives command, all mankind must obey!

The wearied peasants to their rest retire;
Kincraigy bows to sleep's resistless call;
But the kind dame stirred up the sluggish fire,
And with the minstrel long out-sat them all.
He praised her much, her order, and her hall:
Her manners, far above her rank and place;
Her daughter's beauteous form, so comely tall,
The peerless charms of her bewitching face,
So well befitting court, or noble's hall to grace.

Well mayest thou trust the chicken with the dam:
The eaglet in her parents' home sublime;
The yeaning ewe with the poor starveling lamb:
Nor is a son's default a mother's crime:
But a fair only daughter in her prime,
Oh, never trust to mother's wistful care!
The heart's too anxious of her darling's time:
Too well she loves—too well she is aware
In what the maid delights, nor sees the lurking snare.

Aloft was framed the minstrel's humble bed
Of the green braken and the yielding heath,
With coverlet of dowlas o'er it spread;
That too he lauded with obsequious breath.
But he was out, and in—above—beneath,
Unhinging doors, and groping in the dark:
The hamlet matrons dread unearthly scathe;
The maidens hide their heads, the watch-dogs bark,
And all was noise and fright till matin of the lark.

Next day, the wind from eastern oceans drove
The drizzly sea-rack up the Athol plain,
And o'er the woodland and the welkin wove
A moving mantle of the fleecy rain:
The cottagers from labour still refrain;
Well by the lowly window could they spy
The droplets from the thatch descend amain:
While round the hearth they closed with cheerful eye,
Resolved, on better days, with all their might to ply.

Though many hints, to make the minstrel budge,
Were by Kincraigy thrown, they were in vain:
He asked him where that night he meant to lodge,
And when he purposed calling there again?
He could not stir!—the hateful driving rain
Would all his valued tuneful chords undo.
The dame reproached her husband's surly strain,
Welcomed the minstrel's stay, and 'gan to show
Her excellence in song, and skill in music too.

Woe to the hapless wight, self-doomed to see
His measures warped by woman's weak control!
Woe to the man, whate'er his wealth ma
Condemned to prove the everlasting g
The fret, the plaint, the babble, and cowl!
Yet such outnumber all the stars above.
When sponsaled pairs run counter, soul to soul,
Oh, there's an end to all the sweets of love!
That ray of heavenly bliss, which reason should improve.

The dance and song prevailed till fell the night;
The minstrel's forward ease advanced apace;
He kissed their lovely May before their sight,
Who struggled, smiling, from the rude embrace,
And called him fiddler Mador to his face.
Loud laughed the dame, while old Kincraigy frowned;
Her fulsome levity, and flippant grace,
Had oft inflicted on his soul the wound,
But held at endless bay, redress could not be found.

All quietness and peace our minstrel spurns;
Idle confusion through the hamlet rings;
He teazes, flatters, and cajoles by turns,
And to the winds all due distinction flings.
From his rude grasp the cottage matron springs.
The giggling maids in darksome corners hide.
But still to Ila Moore he fondly clings,
Seeming resolved, whatever might betide,
To teaze or flatter her, and all reserve deride.

Next day, by noon, the mountain's misty shroud
The bustling spirits of the air updrew,
And 'gan to open in the boreal cloud
Their marbled windows of the silvery hue:
Far through the bores appeared the distant blue;
Loud sung the merl upon the topmost spray:
The harping bleeter, and the grey curlew,
High in the air chanted incondite lay,
All heralding the approachment of a beauteous day.

The minstrel to the forest turned his eye,
He seemed regretful that the rain should stay;
He seemed to wish the mist would lingering lie
Still on the bosom of the moorland gray.
The time was come he needs must wend his way,
His sovereign's pleasure might his presence claim.
No one remained to row him o'er the Tay,
Unless the blooming May or cordial dame:
The Tay was broad and deep—pray was the maid to blame?

Westward they past by bank and greenwood side,
A varied scene it was of wondrous guise;
Below them parting rivers smoothly glide,
And far above their heads aspiring rise
Gray crested rocks, the columns of the skies,
While little lowly dells lay hid between:
It seemed a fairy land, a paradise,

Where every bloom that scents the woodland green
Opened to heaven its breast, by human eye unseen.

Queen of the forest, there the birch tree swung
Her light green locks aslant the southern breeze;
Red berries of the brake around them hung;
A thousand songsters warbled on the trees.
A scene it was befitting youth to please;
Too well it pleased, as reverend legends say.
Unmarked the hour o'er lovers' head that flees;
'Twas but one little mile!—a summer day!
And when the sun went down they scarce had
reached the Tay.

Oh, read not, lovers—sure you may not think
That Ila Moore by minstrel airs was won!
'Twas nature's cordial glow, the kindred link
That all unweeting chains two hearts in one.
Then why should mankind ween the maid undone,
Though with her youth she seek the woodland deep,
Rest in a bower to view the parting sun,
Lean on his breast, at tale of woe to weep,
Or sweetly, on his arm, recline in mimic sleep?

Oh, I have seen, and fondly blest the sight,
The peerless charms of maiden's guileful freak!
Through the dark eye-lash peep the orb so bright;
The wily features so demurely meek;
The smile of love half dimpling on the cheek;
The quaking breast, that heaves the sigh withal;
The parting lips which more than language speak!—
Of fond delights, which memory can recal,
Oh, beauty's feigned sleep far—far outdoes them all!

O'er such a sleep the enamoured minstrel hung,
Stole one soft kiss, but still she sounder fell;
The half-formed sentence died upon her tongue;
'Twas through her sleep she spoke!—Pray was it well,
Molesting helpless maiden in the dell,
On sweet restoring slumber so intent?
Our minstrel framed resolve I joy to tell—
'Twas, not to harm that beauteous innocent,
For no delight, nor joy, that fancy might present.

When at the ferry, silent long they stood,
And eyed the red beam on the pool that lay,
Or baseless shadow of the waving wood—
That lonely spot, upon the banks of Tay,
Still bears the maiden's name, and shall for aye—
Warm was the parting sigh their bosoms drew;
For sure, the joys of that enchanting day,
'Twas worth an age of sorrow to renew:
Then, glancing oft behind, they sped along the dew.

Oft did Kineraigy's wayward humour keep
The hamlet and the hall in teazing broil;
But his reproaches never cut so deep
As when, that eve, he ceased his rural toil.
He learned the truth, and raised such grievous coil,
That even the dame in rage gave up defence;
The lovely cause of all the wild turmoil
Sat in a corner, grieved for her offence,
Offering no urgent plea, nor any false pretence.

When summer suns around the zenith glow,
Nature is gaudy, frolicsome, and boon;
But when September breezes cease to blow,
And twilight steals beneath the broadened moon,
How changed the scene!—the year's resplendent
noon
Is long gone past, and all is mildly still;
Sedateness settles on the dale and doone;
Wan is the floweret by the mountain rill,
And a pale boding look sits solemn on the hill.

More changed than all the mien of Ila Moore;
Scarce could you trow the self-same soul within:
The buxom lass that loved the revel hour,
That laughed at all, and grieved for nought but sin,
Steals from her darling frolic, jest and din,
And sits alone beneath the fading tree:
Upon her bosom leans her dimpled chin,
Her moistened eye fixed moveless on the lea,
Or vagrant tiny moth that sojourned on her knee.

Her songs, that erst did scarcely maid become,
So framed they were of blandishment and jest,
Were changed into a soft unmeaning hum,
A sickly melody, yet unexpressed.
At tale of pity throbbed her ardent breast;
The tear was ready for mishap or joy;
And well she loved in evening grove to rest,
To tender Heaven her vow without annoy,
Indulging secret thought—a thought that did not
cloy.

The dame perceived the maiden's altered mood;
A dame of keen distinguishment was she!
And oh, her measures were most wondrous shrewd,
And deeply schemed, as woman's needs must be,
Though all the world with little toil could see
Her latent purposes from first to last.
An ancient friar, who shrived the family,
She called into her chamber—barred it fast,
That listener might not hear the important words
that past.

"Father, you marked the gallant minstrel youth
Who lately to the forest passed this way;
I ween, he proffer made of hand and troth
To our own child, and hardly would take nay.
Put on thy humble cowl and frock of gray;
Thy order and array thy warrant be:
And watch the royal tent at close of day.
It stands in glen below the wells of Dee;
Note all entreatment there, and bring the truth to me.

"Young Mador of the Moor, thou know'st him well;
Mark thou what rank he holds, and mark aright,
If with the squires or vulgar grooms he dwell:
If in the outer tent he sleeps by night,
Regard him not, nor wait the morning light;

But if with royalty or knighthood set,
Beckon him forth, in seeming serious plight,
And say, what most will his impatience whet,
That for his sake some cheeks are ever, ever wet!"

Next morn, while yet the eastern mountains threw
Their giant shadows o'er the slumbering dale,
Their darkened verges trembling on the dew
In rosy wreath, so lovely and so pale,
The warped and slender rainbow of the vale;
Ere beauteous Ila's foot had prest the floor,
Or her fair cheek had kissed the morning gale,
A lively rap came to Kincraigy's door—
There stood the active friar, and Mador of the Moor!

Well knew the dame this speed betokened good,
But when she learned that Mador consort held
With majesty and knights of noblest blood,
One of the select number in the field,
Her courtesy no blandishment withheld.
Fair Ila trembled like the aspen bough,
She dreaded passions guidelessly impelled—
'Twas what of all the world she wished; yet now
A weight her heart oppressed, she felt she wist not how.

Kincraigy growled like hunted wolf at bay,
And in his fields from outrage sought relief;
No burning fiend whom convent wights gainsay,
No ruthless abbey reave, nor Ranoch thief,
Did ever work him such chagrin and grief,
As did the minstrel's smooth obtrusive face.
Albert of Glen, his kind but haughty chief,
He saw exposed to infamous disgrace,
Himself to loss of name, of honour, and of place.

His rage availed not—each reflective hint
Was treated by his knowing dame with scorn,
Whose every word, and every action, went
To show him his discernment was forlorn:
He knew no more of life than babe unborn!
'Twas well some could distinguish who was who!
Kincraigy's years were cumbered and outworn
In manful strife his mastery to show,
Though forced on every point his privilege to forego.

The minstrel's table was with viands spread,
His cup was filled though all the rest were dry;
Not on the floor was made the minstrel's bed,
He got the best Kincraigy could supply;
While every day the former did outvie
In idle frolic round Kincraigy's hall:
His frugal meal is changed to luxury;
His oxen low unnoted in the stall;
Loud revelry pervades, and lords it over all.

The blooming May, from his first fond embrace
Shrunk pale and sullen, as from insult high;
A nameless dread was settled on her face;
She feared the minstrel, yet she knew not why.
That previous night, when closed was every eye,
O she had dreamed of grievous scenes to be;
And she had heard a little plaintive cry;
And she had sung beneath the willow tree,
And seen a rueful sight, unfitting maid to see!

But when he told her of his fixed resolve,
That, should they not in wedlock ties be bound,
He never would that loving breast involve
In rankling crime, nor pierce it with a wound,—
It was so generous, she no longer frowned,
But sighing sunk upon his manly breast.
Sweet tender sex! with snares encompassed round,
On others hang thy comforts and thy rest;
Child of dependence born, and failings unconfest!

At eve they leaned upon the flowery sward,
On fairy mound that overlooks the Tay;
And in the greenwood bowers of sweet Kinnaird
They sought a refuge from the noontide ray.
In bowers that scarce received the light of day,
Far, far below a rock's stupendous pile,
In raptures of the purest love they lay,
While tender tale would intervals beguile—
Woe to the venal friar, won to religious wile!

If pure and full terrestrial bliss may be,
And human imperfection that enjoy,
Those twain, beneath the deep embowering tree,
Bathed in that perfect bliss without alloy.
But passion's flame will passion's self destroy,
Such imperfections round our nature lower;
No bliss is ours, that others mayn't annoy:
So happ'd it to Kincraigy's beauteous flower,
And eke her gallant gay, young Mador of the Moor.

Albert of Glen, o'er his betrothed bride
Kept jealous eye, and oft unnoted came;
He saw the minstrel ever by her side,
And how his presence flushed the bustling dame.
Enraged at such a fond ungrateful flame,
One eve he caught them locked in fond embrace;
And, bent his amorous rival's pride to tame,
Began with sandalled foot, and heavy mace,
To work the minstrel woe, and very deep disgrace.

Few and unpolished were the words that passed;
Hard was the struggle and infuriate grasp;
But Mador of the Moor, o'erborne at last,
Beneath his rival's frame began to gasp;
His slender nape was locked in keyless hasp;
A maid's exertion saved him as before—
Her willing fingers made the hands unclasp
That soon had stilled the struggling minstrel's core—
Hence'er had flattered dame nor courted maiden more.

The swords were drawn, but neither jeer nor threat
Could drive the fearless maiden from between;
Again her firmness quelled the dire debate,
And drove the ruffian from their bower of green.
But grim and resolute revenge was seen
In his dark eye, as furious he withdrew;
And Mador of the Moor, his life to screen,
Escaped by night, through shades of murky hue:
The maiden deemed it meet, for Albert well she knew.

And well it proved for him!—At woman's schemes
And deep-laid policy the jeer is due;
But for resource and courage in extremes,
For prompt expedient and affection true,
Distrust her not;—even though her means are few,
She will defeat the utmost powers of man;
In strait, she never yet distinction drew
'Twixt right and wrong, nor squeamishly began
To calculate, or weigh, save how to gain her plan.

Albert of Glen with twenty warriors came.
Beset Kincraigy's hall, and searched it through;
Like the chafed ocean stormed the flustered dame—
Of Mador's hasty flight she did not know.
Kincraigy hoped they would the wight undo;
In his malicious grin was joyance seen.
Albert is baulked of sweet revenge, and now
Blazes outright a chieftain's smothered spleen;
And Mador's lost and gone, as if he ne'er had been.

CANTO THIRD.

The Cottage.

ARGUMENT.

O waly, waly, but love be bonnie,
A little while when it is new!
But when 'tis old it waxes cold,
An' fades away like morning dew.
But had I wist before I kissed,
That love had been so ill to win,
I had locked my heart in a case o' gowd,
An' pinned it wi' a siller pin.

What art thou, Love? or who may thee define!
Where lies thy bourne of pleasure or of pain?
No sceptre, graved by Reason's hand, is thine,
Child of the moistened eye and burning brain,
Of glowing fancy, and the fervid vein,
That soft on bed of roses loves to rest,
And crop the flower where lurks the deadly bane:
Oh, many a thorn those dear delights invest,
Child of the rosy cheek, and heaving snow-white breast!

Thou art the genial balm of virtuous youth,
And point'st where Honour waves her wreath on high:
Like the sweet breeze that wanders from the south,
Thou breath'st upon the soul, where embryos lie
Of new delights, the treasures of the sky.
Who knows thy trembling watch in bower of even,
Thy earliest grateful tear, and melting sigh?
Oh, never was to yearning mortal given
So dear delights as thine, thou habitant of heaven!

Woe that thy regal sway, so framed to please,
Should ever from usurper meet control;
That ever shrivelled wealth, or gray disease,
Should mar the grateful concord of the soul:
That bloated sediment of crazing bowl
Should crop thy blossoms which untasted die:
Or that the blistering phrase of babbler foul
Should e'er profane thy altars, framed to lie
Veiled from all heaven and earth, save silent Fancy's eye!

Oh, I will worship even before thy bust,
When my dimmed eye no more thy smile can see!
While this deserted bosom beats, it must
Still beat in unison with hope and thee:
For I have wept o'er perished ecstasy,
And o'er the fall of beauty's early prime;
But I will dream of new delights to be,
When moon and stars have ceased their range sublime,
And angels rung the knell of all-consuming Time.

Then speed, thou great coeval of the sun;
Thy world with flowers and snows alternate sow:
Long has thy whelming tide resistless run,
And swelled the seas of wickedness and woe.
While moons shall wane, and mundane oceans flow,
To count the hours of thy dominion o'er,
The dyes of human guilt shall deeper grow,
And millions sink to see thy reign no more:
Haste, haste thy guilty course to yon eternal shore!

Cease, thou wild Muse, thy vague unbodied lay:
What boots these wanderings from thy onward tale?
I know thee well! when once thou fliest astray,
To lure thee back no soothing can avail.
Thou lov'st amid the burning stars to sail,
Or sing with sea-maids down the coral deep;
The groves of visionary worlds to hail;
In moonlight dells thy fairy rites to keep,
Or through the wilderness on booming pinion sweep.

Wilt thou not stoop, where beauty sits forlorn,
Trembling at symptoms of approaching woe!
Where lovely Ila, by the aged thorn,
Notes what she scarce dare trust her heart to know?
Mark how her cheek's new roses come and go!
Has Mador dared his virtuous vow to break!
It cannot be;—we may not deem it so;
Spare the ungrateful thought, for mercy's sake!
Alas! man still is man—And woman—ah, how weak!

Why do the maidens of the strath rejoice,
And lilt with meaning gesture on the loan?
Why do they smirk, and talk with giggling voice
Of laces, and of stays; and thereupon
Hang many a fruitful jest?—Ah! is there none
The truth to pledge, and prove the nuptial vow!
Alas! the friar on pilgrimage is gone;
Mador is lost—none else the secret knew,
And all is deemed pretext assumptive and untrue.

Slander prevails, to woman's longing mind
Sweet as the April blossom to the bee;
Her meal that never palls, but leaves behind
An appetite still yearning food to see.
Kincraigy's dame of perspicacity
Sees nought at all amiss, but flounces on;
Her brawling humour shows increased to be;
Much does she speak, in loud and grumbling tone,
Nor time takes to reflect, nor even a prayer to con.

The injured Albert timely sent command
That pierced Kincraigy to the inmost soul,
To drive his worthless daughter from the land,
Or forthwith yield, of goods and gear, the whole.
Alternative severe!—no tale of dole
The chief would hear, on full revenge intent.
The good sagacious dame, in murmuring growl,
Proposed to drive her forth incontinent,
For she deserved it all, and Albert might relent.

"She is to blame," Kincraigy made reply,
"And may deserve so hard a guerdon well:
But so dost thou, and haply I may try
That last expedient with a shrew so fell;
But when I do, no man shall me compel:
For thy own good, to poverty I yield:
My child is still my own, and shall not tell
At Heaven's high bar, that I, her only shield,
For blame that was not hers, expelled her to the field."

Kincraigy leaves his ancient home with tears,
And sits in lowly cot without a name;
No angry word from him his daughter hears,
But oh! how pined the much-degraded dame!
Plaint followed plaint, and blame was eked to blame.
Her muster-roll of grievances how long!
She mentions not her darling minstrel's fame,
His spotless honour, nor affection strong,
But to her weeping child imputes each grievous wrong.

Concealed within the cot's sequestered nook
Where fire had never beamed the gloom to cheer,
Young Ila Moore is doomed her woes to brook,
And every query 's answered by a tear.
What mean those tiny robes, concealed with fear?
These clothes, dear maid, are all unmeet for thee;
Are all unfitting human thing to wear,
Save noble infant on his nurse's knee,—
Yet them thou dost survey, and weep when none can see.

O maiden of the bright and melting eye,
Of the soft velvet cheek and balmy breath,
Whose lips the coral's deepest tints outvie,
Thy bosom fairer than the winter wreath!
Before thou yield'st those lips of simple faith,
Or giv'st that heaving breast to love's caress,
Oh, look beyond!—the sweet luxuriant path
May lead thee into labyrinth of distress:
Think of this comely May, nor deem thy danger less.

Blame not the bard, who yearns thy peace to save;
Who fain would see thy virtuous worth excel
Thy beauty, and thy purity engrave
Where time may scarce the lines of life cancel.
Deem not he on thy foibles lists to dwell,
Thy failings, or the dangers thee belay;
'Tis all to caution thee, and warn thee well.
Wipe but thy little stains of love away
And thou art goodness all, and pure as bloom of May.

To give thy secret ear to lover's tale,
Or cast approving glance, is kindly done;
But, ere thy soul the darling sweets inhale,
Mark out the bourn—nor farther be thou won.
Eventful is the sequel once begun,
And all delusive sweets that onward lie:
Think of the inmost nook of cottage lone,
Of the blenched cheek, the bleared and swimming eye,
And how 'twill thee become, the unsainted lullaby!

'Tis done, and Shame his masterpiece hath wrought:
Why should the laws of God and man combine
To sear the heart with keenest sorrows fraught,
And every blush and every tear enshrine
In brazen tomb of punishment malign?
The gentle sufferer beacon stands to scorn;
Kincraigy's dame is sunk in woes condign;
A helpless minstrel to her house is born,
A grandson hale and fair, and comely as the morn.

Poor child of shame! thy fortune to divine
Would conjure up the scenes of future pain;
No father's house, nor shielding arm is thine;
No banquet hails thee, stranger of disdain.
A lowly shelter from the wind and rain
Hides thy young weetless head, unwelcome guest;
And thy unholy frame must long remain
Unhouselled, and by churchman's tongue unblest;
Yet peaceful is thy sleep, cradled on guileless breast.

Hard works Kincraigy 'mid his woodland reign,
And boasts his earnings to his flustered dame;
Seemed as unknowing the event of pain,
Nor once by him is named his daughter's name,
Till ardent matron of the hamlet came,
And brought the child abrupt his eye before:
He saw the guiltless his protection claim,
With little arms outstretched seemed to implore—
He kissed the babe and wept, then hasted to the door.

But oh, Kincraigy's dame is warped in dread!
The days of Heaven's forbearance are outgone,
And round the unchristened babe's unholy bed
No guardian spirits watch at midnight lone;
Well to malignant elves the same was known—
There slept the babe, to them an easy prey.
Oh! every nightly buzz or distant moan
Drove the poor dame's unrooted wits away;
Her terror 'twas by night, her thought and prayer by day.

Still waxed her dread, for ah! too well she knew
Her floor, o'ernight, had frames unearthly borne;
Around her cot, the giggling fairies flew,
And all arrangement altered ere the morn.
At eve, the candle of its beams was shorn,
While a blue halo round the flame would play;
And she could hear the fairies' fitful horn
Ring in her ears an eldritch roundelay,
When every eye was shut, and her's all wakeful lay.

And many a private mark the infant bore,
Surveyed each morn with dread which none can tell,
Lest the real child was borne to downward shore,
And in his stead, and form, by fairy spell,
Some froward elfin child, deformed and fell:
Oh, how her troubled breast with horror shook,
Lest thing from confines of the lower hell
Might sit upon her knee and on her look!—
'Twas more than her weak mind and fading form could brook.

Sweet Ila Moore had borne the world's revile
With meekness, and with warm repentant tears;
At church anathemas she well could smile,
And silent oft of faithless man she hears.
But now a kind misjudging parent's fears
Oppressed her heart—her father too would sigh
O'er the unrighteous babe, whose early years
Excluded were from saints' society;
Disowned by God and man, an heathen he might die.

Forthwith she tried a letter to indite,
To rouse the faithless Mador's dormant flame:
Her soul was racked with feelings opposite;
She found no words proportioned to his blame.
At memory's page her blushes went and came:
And aye she stooped and o'er the cradle hung,
Called her loved infant by his father's name,
Then framed a little lay, and thus she sung—
"Thy father's far away, thy mother all too young.

"Be still, my babe, be still!—the die is cast;
Beyond thy weal no joy remains for me;
Thy mother's spring was clouded and o'erpast
Erewhile the blossom opened on the tree.
But I will nurse thee kindly on my knee,
In spite of every taunt and jeering tongue;
Oh, thy sweet eye will melt my wrongs to see,
And thy kind little heart with grief be wrung!
Thy father's far away, thy mother all too young.

"If haggard poverty should overtake,
And threat our onward journey to forelay,
For thee I'll pull the berries of the brake,
Wake half the night, and toil the live-long day;
And when proud manhood o'er thy brow shall play,
For me thy bow in forest shall be strung:
The memory of my errors shall decay,
And of the song of shame I oft have sung,
Of father far away, and mother all too young!

"But oh! when mellowed lustre gilds thine eye,
And love's soft passion thrills thy youthful frame,
Let this memorial bear thy mind on high
Above the guilty and regretful flame;
The mildew of the soul, the mark of shame;
Think of the fruit before the bloom that sprung.
When in the twilight bower with beauteous dame,
Let this unbreathed lay hang on thy tongue—
Thy father's far away, thy mother all too young."

When days and nights a stained scroll had seen
Beneath young Ila Moore's betrothed eye;
When many a tear had dropt the lines between,
When dim the page with many a burning sigh,
A boy is charged to Scotland's court to hie,
The pledge to bear, nor leave the minstrel's door
Till answer came. Alas, nor low, nor high,
Porter nor groom, nor warder of the tower.
Had ever heard the name of Mador of the Moor.

CANTO FOURTH.

The Palmer.

ARGUMENT.

Did ye never hear o' the puir auld man,
That doughtna live, and coudna die?
Wha spak to the spirits a' night lang,
An' saw the things we coudna see,
An' raised the bairnies out o' the grave?
Oh but a waesome sight was he!

There is a bounded sphere, where human grief
May all the energies of mind benumb;
'Twixt purpose and regret, it seeks relief
In unavailing plaint, or musings dumb:
But to o'erwhelming height when mounts the sunn,
Oft, to itself superior, mind hath shone,
That broken reed, Dependence, overcome:
Where dwells the might that may the soul unthrone,
Whose proud resolve is moored on its own powers alone?

Why is young Ila dight in robes so gay,
Her hue more lovely than the gold refined?
Why bears she to the southern vales away,
And leaves the woody banks of Tay behind,
Her beauteous boy well wrapt from sun and wind
In mantle spangled like the heath in flower?—
Ah! she is gone her wandering love to find,
In court or camp, in hall or lady's bower,
Resolved to die, or find young Mador of the Moor.

Had she not cause to weep her piteous plight,
In the wide world unfriended thus to be,

A babe unweaned, companion of her flight?
She did not weep; her spirits bounded free;
And, all indignant that her injury
Moved no congenial feeling on her side,
With robe of green, upfolded to her knee,
And light unsandalled foot, o'er wastes so wide
She journeyed far away, with Heaven alone to guide.

She had not traversed far the woods of Bran,
Nor of her native hills had lost the view,
Where oft, on maidhood's lightsome foot, she ran.
Pilfering the rock-rose and the harebell blue,
Or moorland berries bathed in autumn dew,
When, startled, she beheld a palmer gray
Rise from beneath a lonely ronkled yew,
Where he had prostrate lain since dawn of day,
Who proffered her his hand, companion of her way.

He seemed familiar with her wrongs and aim;
Full oft she viewed his face, if she might see
Some feature there that might acquaintance claim—
It wore the mysteries of eternity!
That face was mild as face of age could be,
Yet something there 'twas dread to look upon;
A mien between profound and vacancy,
Bewraying thought to mortal man unknown,
Or soul abstract from sense, with feelings all its own.

She marvelled much to hear, as on they went,
His heavenly converse and his sage replies;
But marked him oft regard with fond intent
Things all invisible to mortal eyes.
The light-winged winds that flaunted through the skies,
Spoke in small voices, like the elfin's tongue;
From welling fountains harmonies would rise,
Like song of lark high in the rainbow hung;—
Seemed as if distant hymns of other worlds they sung.

In pleasing dread she sojourned by his side,
Nor durst she his companionship forego;
But either fear her faculties belied,
Else speech was whispered from the earth below,
And elemental converse round did flow:
The stranger answered oft in varied tone;
Then he would smile, and chide she knew not who.
Seemed as to him each herald cloud was known,
That crept along the hill, or sailed the starry zone.

"Give me thy child, fair dame," he said, and smiled,
Clasping his arms around the comely boy;
"Give me the child, thy youth is sorely toiled,
And I will bear him half the way with joy."
She loosed her hold, unwilling to seem coy;
Scarce was the timid act of sufferance done,
Ere wild ideas wrought her sore annoy,
That elfin king the unchristened babe had won:
Deep in her heart she prayed that God would save her son!

She looked each moment when the old man's form
Would change to something of unearthly guise;
She looked each moment when the thunder-storm
Would roll in folded sulphur from the skies,
And snatch them from her terror-darkened eyes.
She followed nigh, enfeebled with affright,
And saw her boy, in roguish playful wise,
Pulling the old man's beard with all his might,—
The change to him was fraught with new and high delight.

Her heart was quieted, but ill at rest,
And gave unwonted thoughts a teeming birth
Of this most reverend and mysterious guest,
Who scarcely seemed an habitant of earth.
The day was wearing late, no friendly hearth
Was nigh, where converse might the time betray;
The storm was hanging on the mountain swarth
Condense and gloomy, threatening sore dismay
To wanderer of the hills, on rough and pathless way.

A darksome sheiling, westward on the waste,
Stood like a lonely hermit of the glen;
A small green sward its bastioned walls embraced,
Kything right simply sweet to human ken,
On tiny path, unmarked by steps of men:
To that they turned in hopes of welcome meet;
'Twas only then the grovelling badger's den;
Damp was its floor untrode by human feet,
And cold, cold lay the hearth, uncheered by kindly heat.

The marten, from his vault beneath the wall,
Peeped forth with fiend-like eye and fetid breath;
They heard the young brock's whining hunger-call,
And the grim polecat's grinding voice beneath.
The merlin from his raftered home in wrath,
Flitted with flapping wing and eldritch scream;
No downward sepulchre, nor vault of death,
Did ever deed of horror more beseem;
'Twas like some rueful cave seen in perturbed dream.

The storm was on, and darkening still behind,
Alternate rushed the rain and rattling hail;
In deepened breathings sighed the cumbered wind;
Played the swift gleam along the boreal pale,
While distant thunder murmured o'er the gale:
Far up the incumbent cloud its voice began,
Then, like resistless angel, bound to scale
The southern heaven, along the void it ran,
Booming, in wrathful tone, vengeance on sinful man.

It was a dismal and portentous hour:
A mute astonishment and torpid dread
Had settled on the soul of Ila Moore;
In whispered prayers, of Heaven she sought remede:
For well she knew, that He, who deigned to feed
The plumeless sea-bird on the stormy main,
The raven, and the osprey's orphan breed,
To save an injured heart would not disdain,
Nor leave the souls he made to sorrow and to pain.

Nigh and more nigh the rolling thunder came,
Muffled in moving pall of midnight hue;
Fiercer and fiercer burst the flakes of flame
From out the forge of heaven in burning blue.
They split the yawning cloud, and downward flew;
Before their wrath the solid hill was riven;
Some in the lake their fiery heads imbrue,
Its startled waters to the sky were driven,
Belching as if it mocked the angry coil of heaven.

O ye, who mock religion's faded sway,
And flout the mind that bows to Heaven's decree,
Think of the fortitude of that fair May,
Her simple youth, in such a place to be,
In such a night, and in such company.—
With guest she weened not man of woman born,
A babe unblest upon her youthful knee!
Had she not cause to deem her case forlorn?
No! trusting to her God, she calmly waited morn.

The palmer did no sign of fear bewray,
But raised a fire with well-accustomed hand,
Smiled at the thunder's break and startling bray,
The chilly hail-shower and the whizzing brand,
In wild turmoil that vollied o'er the land.
Then he would mutter prayer or rite of sin;
Then prattle to the child in language bland;
While the fond mother groaned in heart within,
Lest at the turn of night the fiends her babe might win.

The palmer, for his helpless partners, made
A bed of flowery heath and rushes green;
Then o'er the twain his mantle kindly spread,
And bade them sleep secure, though lodged so mean;
For near that lowly couch, by them unseen,
There stood a form familiar to his eye,
Whose look was marked with dignity serene,
To ward the freakish fays that lingered nigh,
Who seemed on evil bent—he saw not, knew not why.

The palmer watched beside the hissing flame,
The mother clasped her child in silence deep;
That speech of mystery thrilled her ardent frame.
For why?—she knew the fays their wake did keep
To reave her child if she should yield to sleep!
No sleep she knew—if woman's word is aught—
But, venturing o'er her coverlet to peep,
Whether through glamour or bewildered thought,
She there beheld a scene with awful wonder fraught.

From every crevice of the wall there looked
Small elvish faces of malignity;
And oh, their gleaming eyes could ill be brooked,
All bent upon the babe that slumbered by!
Ready they seemed upon their prey to fly,
And oft they sprung, or stole with wary tread:
But o'er the couch a form of majesty
Stood all serene, whose eye the spirits fled,
Waving the golden wand she waved around the bed.

The palmer saw—and, as the damsel thought,
Joyed that the assailing spirits were outdone:
Still waxed their number, still they fiercer fought,
Till the last lingering sand of night was run;
Till the red star the gate of heaven had won,
And woke the dreaming eagle's lordly bay,
And heath-cock's larum on the moorland dun;
Then did they shrink, and vanish from the fray,
Far from the eye of Morn, on downward paths away.

Spent was the night, and the old reverend sire
Had never closed his eyes, but watched and wept,
Muttering low vespers o'er his feeble fire,
Or, all intent, a watchful silence kept.
Now o'er his silver beard the round tear dripped,
Aside his cowl with hurried hand he flung,
Wiped his high brow, and cheek with sorrow stepped,
Then, with an upcast eye and tremulous tongue,
Unto the God of Life this matin hymn he sung.

The Palmer's Morning Hymn.

Lauded be thy name for ever,
Thou, of life the guard and giver!
Thou canst guard thy creatures sleeping,
Heal the heart long broke with weeping,
Rule the ouphes and elves at will,
That vex the air or haunt the hill,
And all the fury subject keep
Of boiling cloud and chafed deep:
I have seen, and well I know it;
Thou hast done, and thou wilt do it.
God of stillness and of motion,
Of the rainbow and the ocean,
Of the mountain, rock, and river,
Blessed be thy name for ever!

I have seen thy wondrous might,
Through the shadows of this night;
Thou, who slumber'st not nor sleepest,
Blest are they thou kindly keepest;
Spirits from the ocean under,
Liquid flame, and levelled thunder,
Need not waken nor alarm them—
All combined they cannot harm them.
God of evening's yellow ray,
God of yonder dawning day
That rises from the distant sea
Like breathings of eternity;
Thine the flaming sphere of light,
Thine the darkness of the night,
Thine are all the gems of even,
God of angels, God of heaven.
God of life that fade shall never,
Glory to thy name for ever!

That little song of rapt devotion fell
Upon a feeling heart, to nature true.
So soothing sweet, 'twas like the distant swell

Of seraph hymn along the vales of blue,
When first they ope to sainted spirit's view,
That through the wilds of space hath journeyed far,
Hoping, yet trembling as he onward flew,
Lest God the emerald gates of heaven might bar,
Till rests the joyous shade on some sweet peaceful star.

Till then she knew not that the wondrous sage
Was conversant with heaven, or fiends of hell;
Till then she knew not that his reverend age
Cared of the Almighty or his love to tell.
Sweet and untroubled as the dews that fell
Her morning slumbers were—the palmer lay
Stretched on the unyielding stone, accustomed well
To penance dire, and spirits' wild deray:
There slept they all in peace till high uprose the day.

They journeyed on by Almond's silver stream,
That wimpled down a green untrodden wild;
By turns their hapless stories were the theme,
And aye the listener bore the pleased child.
The attentive sage nor chided nor reviled,
When simple tale of maiden love she said;
Meek his reproof, and flowed in words so mild,
It tended much her constancy to aid,
And cheer her guileless heart from truth that never strayed.

"Fair dame," he said, "thou may'st have done amiss,
And thou art brought to poverty and woe;
What now remains, but quietly to kiss
The lash that hangs o'er virtue's overthrow?
Be virtue still thy meed, thy trust, and know
It thee befits from murmur to refrain;
No plaint of thy just wounds be heard to flow,
The hand that gave will bind them up again.
List my distracting tale, and blame thy fortune then!

"I was the lord of Stormont's fertile bound,
Of Isla's vale, and Eroch's woodland glade:
I loved—I sighed—my warmest hopes were crowned—
Oh, deed of shame! I vowed, and I betrayed!
The proud Matilda, now no longer maid,
Disdained my base unfaithful heart to move;
She knew not to solicit, nor upbraid,
But did a deed, the last of lawless love;
Ah! it hath seared my soul, that peace no more shall prove!

"I knew not all, yet marvelled much to see
That scarce a circling year had rolled away,
Ere she appeared the gayest maid to be
That graced the hall, or gambolled at the play.
With Methven's lord was fixed her bridal day:
Proud of her triumph, I—the chiefest guest—
Led her to church—Ah! never such array
Did woman's form of vanity invest,
Bright as the orient ray, or streamer of the west.

"Scarce had we stepped the foremost of the train,
Within the church-yard's low and crumbling wall,
When, sweet as sunbeam gleaming through the rain,
We saw a shining row of children small.
Fair were their forms, and fair their robes withal;
But oh! each radiant and unmoving eye
Was fixed on us!—forget I never shall
How well they seemed my very soul to spy,
And hers—the sparkling bride, that moved so graceful by.

"Proud of their note, or charmed with the sight,
She turned aside with step of dignity:
All still and motionless, they stood upright,
Save one sweet babe that slightly bent the knee,
With such a smile of mild benignity,
These eyes shall ne'er such face again behold!
His flaxen curls like filmy silk did flee;
His tiny form seemed cast in heavenly mould;
His cheek like blossom pale, in April morning cold.

"'Sweet babe,' she simpered, with affected mien,
'Thou art a lovely boy; if thou wert mine,
I'd deck thee in the gold and diamonds sheen,
And daily bathe thee in the rosy wine;
The musk-rose and the balmy eglantine
Around thy soft and silken couch should play:
How fondly would these arms around thee twine!
Asleep or waking, I would watch thee aye,
Caress thee all the night, and love thee all the day.'

"'O lady of the proud unfeeling soul,
'Tis not three little months since I was thine;
And thou did'st deck me in the grave-cloth foul,
And bathe me in the blood—that blood was mine!
Instead of damask rose and eglantine,
The reptile's brood plays round my guiltless core:
Ah! could'st thou deem there was no eye divine,
And that the deed would sleep for evermore?
Did'st thou ne'er see this pale, this pleading look before?'

"That moment I beheld, beneath mine eye,
A smiling babe, with hands and eyes upraised;
A pale and frantic mother trembled nigh—
She kneeled—she seized its arm!—the knife was raised—
'Hold, hold!' I cried; yet motionless I gazed,
And saw——O God of heaven! I see it now:
I see the eye-beam sink in deadly haze;
The quivering lip, the bent and gelid brow—
Oh, I shall see that sight in being yet to know!

"To wild disorder turned the bridal hall;
Oh, still at me her frenzied looks she threw!
All in amazement fled the festival,
The sufferer to the wild at midnight flew.
Thou found'st me underneath a lonely yew;
There I have prayed, and oft must pray again.
There ravens fed, and red the daisies grew,
Yet *they* were white! without a dye or stain,
The slender scattered bones there bleached in the rain.

"Fair dame, thy crime is purity to mine:
I must go pray, for I am haunted still:
In heaven is mercy.—I may not repine,
But bow submissive, since it is the will
Of Him, who cares and feels for human ill.
They deem me mad, and laugh my woes to scorn,
And name me crazy Connel of the hill:
My heart is broke, my brain with watching worn;
I must go pray to God, for I am racked and torn!"

He kneeled beside the gray stone on the heath,
And loud his orisons of dread began;
Such words were never framed of human breath,
Such tones of vehemence never poured by man!
Madly through veiled mysteries he ran,
With voice of howling and unvisioned eye;
Then would the tears drop o'er his cheek so wan,
And he would calmly plead, with throb and sigh,
And name his Saviour's name with deep humility.

Three days they journeyed on through moor and dale,
Till faded far the hills of Tay behind;
Still he was gentle as the southern gale,
Mild as the lamb, compassionate and kind;
But oh, far wilder than the winter wind
Whene'er a world of spirits was the theme!
Then he would name unbodied things of mind,
That paced the air, or skimmed along the stream:
His life seemed all a waste, a wild and troubled dream.

Still had the crime of innocence betrayed,
Which terminated not with shame alone,
Oppressed his heart and on his reason preyed;
In tears of blood that crime he did bemoan.
Though mazed were all his thoughts, yet to atone
For that to Heaven which reckless he had done,
O'er maiden innocence to watch anon
He ceased not, wearied not, till life was run.
Oh, be his tale a warning youthful vice to shun!

When nigh the verge of southern vale they came,
And green Strathallan opened to their view,
He blest the child and mother in the name
Of heaven's Eternal King, with reverence due;
Then turning round, with maddened strides withdrew
Back to his desert solitude again,
To watch the moon, and pray beneath his yew,
Controlling spirits on their mountain reign,
Till death brought unity, for ever to remain.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Christening.

ARGUMENT.

I gat thee in my father's bower
Wi' muckle shame and sin,
An' brought thee up in good greenwood
Aneath the heavy rain.
Oft hae I by thy cradle sat,
An' fondly seen thee sleep—
. . . . . .
Gae rowe my young son in the silk,
An' lay my lady as white as the milk.

Old Strevline, thou stand'st beauteous on the height,
Amid thy peaceful vales of every dye,
Amid bewildered waves of silvery light
That maze the mind and toil the raptured eye.
Thy distant mountains, spiring to the sky,
Seem blended with the mansions of the blest;
How proudly rise their gilded points on high
Above the morning cloud and man's behest,
Like thrones of angels hung upon the welkin's breast!

For these I love thee; but I love thee more
For the gray relics of thy martial towers,
Thy mouldering palaces and ramparts hoar,
Throned on the granite pile that grimly lowers,
Memorial of the times, when hostile powers
So often proved thy steadfast patriot worth:
May every honour wait thy future hours,
And glad the children of thy kindred Forth!
I love thy very name, old bulwark of the North.

Alas! the winding Forth and golden vale
Caught not the eye of her who sought thy gate:
Her spirits sank, her heart began to fail;
Weeping she came, nor could her tale relate.
Mador she named, and, trembling for her fate.
Watched the tall porter's dark unmeaning stare,
Who jested rudely of her hapless state,
And bade her to some distant country fare,
For such a name as that no Scot did ever bear.

Humbly she begged to pass the porch within.
That of the nobles she a view might gain,
And her inquiries cautiously begin;
But all her urgent prayers and tears were vain.
Harsh she was told, "no longer to remain,
For knights and lords would soon be passing by,
And they would be offended at such stain
Upon their knighthood and their honours high:
That such as she seemed made for mischief purposely."

No beam of anger rayed her glistening eye,
It sunk like star within the rubied west;
Or like the tinted dew-bell, seen to lie
Upon the rose-leaf tremblingly at rest,
Then softly sinks upon its opening breast—
So sunk her eye, while firmly she replied,
"Since no appeal, nor plea of the distressed,
To Scotland's court may come, whate'er betide,
Thou shalt not drive me hence till I am satisfied."

Oh, many an eve she wandered round the rock,
In hopes her faithless minstrel to espy:
And many a time to dame and townsman spoke,
With blush obtrusive, and with question shy;
But nor by name, by garb, by minstrelsy,
Nor strict discernment, could she Mador find:
Her fond and ardent hopes began to die;
In cheerless apathy with all mankind,
She only wished to leave the world and shame behind.

Loath to depart and seek a cheerless home,
Down at the base of Strevline's rock she lay;
She wished her head laid in the peaceful tomb;
She kissed her boy, but word she could not say.
She turned her eyes to heaven in act to pray—
Oh, hold those lips, unused to give offence!
That prayer will rise in wild impassioned way;
How have thy woes arisen, and from whence?
Oh search, before thou dar'st accuse Omnipotence!

The worthy Abbot of Dunfermline came;
He marked her beauty, and he heard her weep.
Silent he paused, and eyed her lovely frame:
For churchmen aye observant eye do keep
On female beauty: though devotion deep,
And homilies behove the holy mood,
From rostrum still in wily guise they peep—
For why?—by them 'tis wisely understood,
That to admire the chief of all Heaven's works is good.

The abbot ne'er had looked on face so meek;
The pleasure that it gave was mixed with pain:
He saw her lift her full blue eyes to speak;
She only sighed and cast them down again,
Then viewed her babe, while tears fell down like rain,
Wiped her young cheek, and back her ringlets threw:
The abbot's honest bosom heaved amain;
A look so lovely ne'er had met his view—
'Twas like a forest rose, wet with untimely dew.

Question respectful, and sincere reply,
Brought on a long and earnest conference.
The tale was told of Mador's perfidy
Which thou hast heard—but still, on some pretence
Of treacherous memory, or lost incidence,
The abbot caused her tell it o'er and o'er;
Then did he stand in long and deep suspense,
As bent some dubious mystery to explore;
As one who little said, but thought and knew much more.

Still did his eye oppress the gentle dame:
Not on her face, but arm, it seemed to stay;
She weened her boy did this attention claim,
And set his cap, and donned his overlay,
Then watched the abbot's eye—but not that way
It seemed to bend—a trivial ring she wore,
Of silver framed, neglected, old, and gray,
Warped with the unknown mysteries of yore;—
'Twas on that ancient ring his eye directly bore.

"Fair dame," he said, "did thy betrayer leave
No token of his faith, nor pledge of love?
Did he, like knight, no ring or bracelet give,
Which he was bound to challenge or approve?"
Her thought-bewildered eyes began to move
Now to the ring, now to the abbot's face;
Faint recollections o'er their lustre wove
A still, a doubtful, melancholy grace—
'Twas like an April sky, which dubious shades embrace.

She spread her fair hand trembling in the air—
"Save that old ring, no other pledge have I;
He gave't in moment of distracting care,
When from my arms and danger forced to fly:
Something he said, but of what tendency,
Or what effect, remembrance ne'er could frame.
From the device I nothing may imply;
Nor mark it bears, unless the moulder's name—
Small its avail to me, nor other pledge I claim."

A glow of anger flushed the abbot's face;
He knew the old dis-valued ring full well;
And much its owner wished he to disgrace,
For he was generous, but shrewdly fell.
"I'll find him out," he said, "by search or spell,
If in fair Scotland he holds rank or place—
Remain thou here till I our sovereign tell."
Then up the hill he strode with hurried pace,
And left the lovely dame in sad uncertain case.

Scarce was he gone, when on the path she saw,
That leads from vale of Strevline to the town,
A weary wight that toward her did draw,
With hanging hose, and plaid around him thrown;
His grizzled locks waved o'er his cheek so brown;
She thought his stoop and stride too well she knew:
His mournful eyes to earth were fixed down,
Save when a transient glance he upward threw
Where Scotland's palace rose, and her broad banners flew.

She heard him mutter vow of fell revenge;
Closer to earth she clung, in fear and shame,
Resolved nor word nor look with him to change:
But all unbrookable, as nigh he came,
Her bosom yearned, her heart was in a flame:
Feebly she cried, "My father, turn this way!"
Up stretched the stranger's rough uncourtly frame—
'Twas old Kincraigy, from the banks of Tay,
Who stood like statue grim, in wild and doubtful way.

That painful greeting may not be defined;
Nature's own language flowed from either tongue;
Nor fell reproach, nor countenance unkind,
With freezing scowl above their soothings hung:
Both child and mother to his bosom clung;
He wiped her tears, and bade from grief refrain;
"Thou art my child, and thou hast suffered wrong—
How could'st thou leave me, prey to sharpest pain?
But I have found thee now, we ne'er shall part again!"

Straight to the royal hall the abbot went,
Where sat the king, his dames, and nobles all;
Scarce did he beckon, scarce his brow he bent,
But raised his hand their sole regard to call,
And thus began, while silence swayed the hall:—
"My liege, I grieve such message here to bring;
But now there waits below your palace wall
The loveliest flower that ever graced the spring,
That ever mounted throne, or shone in courtly ring.

"She bears a form of such delightful mould,
I weened before me sylvan goddess stood;
Such beauty these old eyes did ne'er behold:
Nay, smile not, dames—for, by the blessed rood,
What I aver I pledge me to make good.
She's Beauty's self portrayed, and to her breast
Is prest a lovely babe of playful mood.
She has been wronged, betrayed, and sore oppressed,
And, could a heart believe!—the traitor here is guest."

The king was wroth, and rose from off his throne,
Looked round for flush of guilt, then raised his hand:
"By this!" said he, "the knight that so hath done
Shall reparation make, or quit the land.
I hold not light the crime, and do command
A full relation; he who can betray
Such beauty with false vow, and promise bland,
As lieve will dupe his king in treacherous way—
The ruthless traitor's name, and hers, good abbot, say."

"Thou art my generous king," the abbot cried.
"And Heaven will bless thee for this just award!
This feeble arm of mine hath erst been tried,
And for the injured has a foeman dared:
And should the knight your mandate disregard—
'Tis old and nerveless now, and small its power,
But all his skill its vengeance shall not ward—
Beshrew his heart, but he shall rue the hour!
The knight is Mador hight, the dame fair Ila Moore."

As e'er you saw the chambers of the west,
When summer suns had journeyed to the main,
Now sallow pale, now momently oppressed
With crimson flush, the prelude of the rain,
So looked the king; and stamped and scowled amain
To stay the abbot's speech, who deigned no heed,
But did, with sharpest acritude, arraign
The low deceit, the doer and the deed,
And lauded much the king for what he had decreed.

"I think I know the wight," the king replied;
"He is abashed, and will not own it now;
But my adjudgment shall be ratified—
A king hath vowed, and must not break his vow."
Then looked he round, with smooth deceitful brow,
As he the mark of conscious guilt had seen;
Then, with majestic air and motion slow,
Walked with the abbot forth into the green;
But all unknown the strain of converse them between.

The abbot hasted to his lovely ward—
Judge of his false conjecture and alarms,
When he beheld this nymph of high regard
So fondly folded in a stranger's arms.
But oh, how much they added to her charms,
The filial tears adown her cheek that ran!
The kindest glow the human heart that warms
Played o'er the visage of the holy man;
While he, to sooth his guests, an artful tale began.

He led them to his home of peace the while,
Where all was rich, yet all in simple guise,
And strove with cheerful converse to beguile
Each latent fear and sorrowful surmise.
Well skilled to read in language of the eyes
What the still workings of the heart might be,
He bade her don those robes of courtly guise,
For they were hers, a gift bestowed free,
And ere the fall of night her minstrel she might see.

When from the chamber she returned, arrayed
In braided silk and rich embroidery,
The abbot rose, confounded and dismayed,
And old Kineraigy nigh had bent his knee:
An earthly form she scarcely seemed to be;
Such dazzling beauty neither once had seen.
"Fair dame, a lady thou may'st shortly be,"
Said the good abbot, with enraptured mien,
"But Nature meant thee more, she formed thee for a queen!"

Scarce had she answer with a blush assayed,
Scarce raised th' astonished babe unto her breast,
When entered Mador with a look that said
His heart was generous and his mind oppressed:
His minstrel garb he wore, and purple crest.
Nought of his woodland flower he could espy,
But one who on a silken couch did rest,
That seemed some form of eastern deity:
The minstrel bowed full low, while wonder dimmed his eye.

The shifting hues that sported o'er her face
Were like the streamers of the rosy eve,
And to her beauty lent a nameless grace—
Those blushes could not Mador undeceive.
His fancy made no motion to believe
That e'er his Highland maid had half the charms,
Till the good abbot did his mind relieve,
In pity of a female's fond alarms:
"What, my first love!" he cried, and sprung into her arms.

He kissed her lips, he kissed her burning cheek,
Caressed her young son in the fondest way;
A chain of gold was hung around her neck,
And diamond bracelets shed the sparkling ray;
Such kind and fond endearment did he pay,
The abbot scarce from weeping could refrain:
Nought good or bad could old Kineraigy say;
The farthest corner did his brow sustain,
And when they spoke to him he could not speak again.

"Thou shalt be mine," the generous minstrel said;
"If I had known my love's unhappy state,
Not all the land my presence should have staid:
Thou hast been injured, and my blame is great.
This night the holy abbot we'll entreat
To join our hands, then art thou doubly mine;
Then hie thee back to Tay, for I must wait
Our sovereign's will; but do not thou repine,
For all thy native hills, from Tay to Bran, are thine.

"I have some favour with our monarch's ear,
And he hath kindly granted my request;
If this our son his royal name may bear,
That his shall be an earldom of the best.
I have his signet, and his high behest
To turn the ruthless Albert to the door:
The royal bounds, that border to the west,
He grants thee too—these all are thine secure,
And every dame on Tay shall stoop to Ila Moore.

"Haply to distant land I now may roam,
But next when summer flowers the Highland lea
I will return, and seek my woodland home
Within the bowers of sweet Kinnaird with thee.
There is a lowly spot beneath the tree,
O'ershadowed by the cliff—thou knowest it well!
In that sweet solitude our cot shall be;
There first we loved, and there in love we'll dwell,
And long, long shall it stand, a minstrel's faith to tell.

"When summer eve hath wove her silken screen,
Her fairy net-work of the night and day;
Hath tipt with flame the cone of mountain green,
And dipt the red sun in the springs of Tay;
How sweet with thee above the cliff to stray,
And see the evening stretch her starry zone!
Or, shaded from the sun's meridian ray,
Lie stretched upon the lap of greenwood lone:
Oh, happier shalt thou be for sorrows undergone!"

Their hands were joined—a mother's heart was blest;
Her son was christened by his sovereign's name;
In gold and scarlet the young imp was dressed,
A tiar on his head of curious frame.
But ne'er on earth was seen a minstrel's dame
Shine in such beauty and such rich array!
An hundred squires and fifty maidens came
Riding on palfreys, sporting all the way,
To guard this splendid dame home to her native Tay.

Needs not to sing of after joys that fell,
Of years of glory and felicity;
Needs not on time and circumstance to dwell:—
All who have heard of maid of low degree,
Hight Ila Moore, upraised in dignity
And rank all other Scottish dames above,
May well conceive who Mador needs must be,
And trace the winding mysteries of his love;—
To such my tale is told, and such will it approve.

CONCLUSION.

Return, my harp, unto the Border dale,
Thy native green hill, and thy fairy ring;
No more thy murmurs on the Grampian gale
May wake the hind in covert slumbering;
Nor must thy proud and far outstretched string
Presume to renovate the northern song,
Wakening the echoes Ossian taught to sing;
Their sleep of ages still they must prolong,
Till son inspired is born their native hills among.

Loved was the voice that wooed from Yarrow bowers
Thy truant flight to that entrancing clime;
She weened thy melody and tuneful powers,
Mellowed by custom, and matured by time;
Or that the sounds and energies sublime,
That darkly dwell by cataract and steep,
Would rouse anew thy visionary chime,
Too long by southland breezes lulled asleep.
Oh may she well approve thy wild and wandering sweep!

Should her fair hand bestow the earliest bays;
Although proud learning lift the venomed eye,
Still shalt thou warble strains of other days,
Struck by some tuneful spirit lingering nigh;
Till those, who long have passed derisive by,
Shall list to hear thy tones when newly strung;
And Scottish maidens over thee shall sigh,
When I am all unnamed by human tongue,
And thy enchanted chords by other hands are rung.

THE PILGRIMS OF THE SUN.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

In a poem of which the title gives such magnificent promise, we are by no means prepared for its high revelations by the following homely and somewhat startling exordium:—

> "Of all the lasses in fair Scotland,
> That lightly bound o'er muir and lea,
> There's nane like the maids of Yarrowdale,
> *Wi' their green coats kilted to the knee.*"

Let us not despise the strain, however, on account of the lowly key-note with which it commences. We soon find, that this mention of the high-kilted maidens of Yarrowdale serves as an introduction to the heroine of the tale, Mary Lee of Carelha', a damsel as simple-minded, pure, and beautiful, as "bonnie Kilmeny" herself, but withal more studious, reflective, and widely read, so that in an age of superstition—

> "She feared the half that the bedesman said
> Was neither true nor plain to man."

It was the scepticism of an innocent mind yearning for a higher knowledge than she could discover, and a more congenial society than that which surrounded her—a disposition which in such an age brought her in fearful proximity to the statute *de hereticis* and the pile of martyrdom. At last, her heavenward aspirations find their way, and her high mystical longings are to be satisfied. After a night of vigil and supplication, an angel form suddenly appears to her, and bids her arise and follow him—and in a moment she finds herself a disembodied spirit, and ascends with her celestial guide. After the magnificent prospects revealed by such a flight, of which the poet ably avails himself for the purposes of description, the pair enter the regions of space where there was neither upward nor downward; and although Mary sees beautiful worlds in which she would fain have dwelt for ever, she is borne beyond them all into the sun itself, where she stands with her angelic guide, Cela, having the whole universe open to their view, and where he explains to her the wonders which every moment arrest her notice. And, of course, what an opportunity of moralizing upon mundane vanity!—and how little, dark, and wretched this world is made to show, in that universe of which it is but an atom! After Cela has explained as much of these wonders as her limited humanity needs to comprehend, they enter the regions of the blest—into those sacred recesses where "angels fear to tread," but where poets are so apt to rush in without doubting or demur. Among the spectacles they contemplate as they stand on the outer rim of the holy place, Mary Lee sees a planet, once a happy world, but now kindled into a blazing comet, and sent booming into the depths of chaos—a description of which is given with Miltonic grandeur and power—and she is told that thus it shall also be with her own native world, when its iniquities are full, and its destinies accomplished. After having been enlightened with these wonderful revelations, by which her doubts and disquietudes are laid to rest, Mary is conducted by her guide among the planet worlds, some the homes of love and happiness, some of strife and bloodshed, and other some of useless cares and vain pursuits; and, amidst these diversities, Cela takes the opportunity of instructing his pupil in philosophy, as he had formerly indoctrinated her in the higher matters of theology.

But this lecture must end, the earth be revisited, and suspended life resumed, and Mary accordingly is led back by Cela to her old home of Carelha', into which she enters without delay or misgiving. But she is astonished to find herself nothing but a viewless phantom, and that her body had been buried in the churchyard of Lindeen. Thither she glides, and finds her corpse in the act of being disinterred by an avaricious monk, for the purpose of despoiling it of its ornaments. Of course, she suddenly reanimates her fair frame, and the monk flies howling from the spectacle. She now returns to her home, a living, substantial form, but instead of welcome is greeted with shrieks; for her trance had been received as a veritable death, and her friends could see no propriety in a visit from the churchyard. At length, however, better feelings prevailed: she told the whole tale of her strange journeyings, and although not understood, it was believed by all but the priests, who demurred, as did their brethren at the discoveries of Galileo:—

> "The mass-men said, with fret and frown,
> That through all space it well was known,
> By moon, or stars, the earth or sea,
> An up and down there needs must be."

Of the strange events that follow, and the mysterious manner in which Mary Lee discovers an earthly Cela so like the heavenly, that he seems to be the same; of their marriage, and the life half-earthly half-angelic which they lead to the close, it is unnecessary to make further mention: these are but the natural sequel, and not the least important or attractive part, of this singular narrative, in which so much is made—and yet not too much, according to the range of poetical probability—of a simple case of syncope or catalepsy. Such tales have been in circulation, and such tales have been devoutly believed, in every age and country. The idea seems to have been especially adapted to the bent and character of the Scottish imagination, so

that among the nursery oral legends of our country about the close of the last century, some story of a dead-alive was certain to form a choice part of the collection. In almost every case, also, the subject of such a burial and restoration was a lady, destined to be the mother of some wonderful person whom the world could not well have dispensed with. We can remember how, in the days of our wondering childhood, we heard such a posthumous birth attributed to Ebenezer Erskine, the Father of the Scottish Secession, and thought the narrative worth a whole volume of giants, hobgoblins, and fairies.

The childhood and youth of Hogg were familiarized with such legends, and with one especially, where the scene was laid at old Lindeen, in which, if we mistake not, the resuscitation of the buried lady was effected by the avarice of the sexton, who, in cutting her finger to extract from it a valuable ring, restored her to life as soon as the blood began to flow. She was not dead but sleeping—and what the while might have been her dreams? Nothing is left for poetry but to fill up the outline, which has been repeatedly done, and by none, we believe, so ably as by the Ettrick Shepherd. In the "Pilgrims of the Sun," he had only to delineate those wanderings of his imagination into other spheres of being which formed so large a portion of his life, and in which he so enthusiastically loved to expatiate. Although as a tale, therefore, it may be complained of as unnatural, disjointed, or inartificial, according to the mood of the critic, no such censure can be established against it as a poem. The four different kinds of versification in which its different parts are embodied, are well adapted to the changes of the narrative; while the pictures of earthly beauty and simplicity, or of celestial grandeur and terror which alternate through the poem, exhibit a mastery in these opposite powers of the descriptive seldom found united in the same poet.

In writing the "Pilgrims of the Sun," the intention of its author was to make it part of a series entitled "Midsummer Night Dreams," which he intended to publish in one volume, consisting of the above, with the poems of "Superstition" and "Connel of Dee." But on showing the chief poem to Mr. Park of Greenock, that gentleman was so highly pleased with the "Pilgrims of the Sun," that he advised its publication as a separate work. He probably thought its excellence too striking to allow its publication as the mere unit of a series; and he may have feared that the ambitious title designed for the series, would bring it into too dangerous a neighbourhood with Shakspeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," by which the wrath of criticism might have been unduly provoked. Hogg yielded up his favourite scheme with reluctance, and the "Pilgrims of the Sun" was sent forth unaccompanied; "but the poem," he informs us, "was no sooner issued to the public, than I perceived a sort of wild unearthly nakedness about it that rendered it unfit to appear by itself, and I repented of what I had done." This nakedness we believe our readers will be unable to see, and with this nervous apprehension they will be unwilling to sympathize. The poem is in itself too complete to need the aid of such associates. In an entire collection also of the Ettrick Shepherd's Poetical Works, where the poems in question appear, each may make for himself the classification or not, according to his own good pleasure.

THE PILGRIMS OF THE SUN.

DEDICATION TO FIRST EDITION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD BYRON.

Not for thy crabbed state-creed, wayward wight,
Thy noble lineage, nor thy virtues high,
(God bless the mark!) do I this homage plight;
No—'tis thy bold and native energy;
Thy soul that dares each bound to overfly,
Ranging through Nature on erratic wing:
These do I honour, and would fondly try
With thee a wild aerial strain to sing:
Then, O! round Shepherd's head thy charmed mantle fling.

PART FIRST.

Of all the lasses in fair Scotland,
That lightly bound o'er muir and lee,
There's nane like the maids of Yarrowdale,
Wi' their green coats kilted to the knee.

Oh! there shines mony a winsome face,
And mony a bright and beaming e'e;
For rosy health blooms on the cheek,
And the blink of love plays o'er the bree.

But ne'er by Yarrow's sunny braes,
Nor Ettrick's green and wizard shaw,
Did ever maid so lovely won
As Mary Lee of Carelha'.[1]

Oh! round her fair and sightly form
The light hill-breeze was blithe to blow,
For the virgin hue her bosom wore
Was whiter than the drifted snow.

The dogs that wont to growl and bark,
Whene'er a stranger they could see,
Would cower, and creep along the sward,
And lick the hand of Mary Lee.

On form so fair, or face so mild,
The rising sun did never gleam;
On such a pure untainted mind
The dawn of truth did never beam.

She never had felt the stounds of love,
Nor the waefu' qualms that breed o' sin;
But ah! she showed an absent look,
And a deep and thoughtfu' heart within.

She looked with joy on a young man's face,
The downy chin, and the burning eye,
Without desire, without a blush;
She loved them, but she knew not why.

She learned to read, when she was young,
The books of deep divinity;
And she thought by night, and she read by day,
Of the life that is, and the life to be.

And the more she thought, and the more she read
Of the ways of Heaven and Nature's plan,
She feared the half that the bedesmen said
Was neither true nor plain to man.

Yet she was meek, and bowed to Heaven
Each morn beneath the shady yew,
Before the laverock left the cloud,
Or the sun began his draught of dew.

And when the gloaming's gouden veil
Was o'er Blackandro's summit flung,
Among the bowers of green Bowhill
Her hymn she to the Virgin sung.

And aye she thought, and aye she read,
Till mystic wildness marked her air;
For the doubts that on her bosom preyed
Were more than maiden's mind could bear.

And she grew weary of this world,
And yearned and pined the next to see;
Till Heaven in pity earnest sent,
And from that thraldom set her free.

One eve when she had prayed and wept
Till daylight faded on the wold—
The third night of the waning moon,
Well known to hind and matron old;

For then the fairies boun' to ride,
And the elves of Ettrick's greenwood shaw;
And aye their favourite rendezvous
Was green Bowhill and Carelha'—

There came a wight to Mary's knee,
With face, like angel's, mild and sweet;
His robe was like the lily's bloom,
And graceful flowed upon his feet.

He did not clasp her in his arms,
Nor showed he cumbrous courtesy;
But took her gently by the hand,
Saying, "Maiden, rise and go with me.

"Cast off, cast off these earthly weeds,
They ill befit thy destiny;
I come from a far distant land
To take thee where thou long'st to be."

She only felt a shivering throb,
A pang defined that may not be;
And up she rose, a naked form,
More lightsome, pure, and fair than he.

He held a robe in his right hand,
Pure as the white rose in the bloom;
That robe was not of earthly make,
Nor sewed by hand, nor wove in loom.

When she had donn'd that light scymar,
Upward her being seemed to bound;
Like one that wades in waters deep,
And scarce can keep him to the ground.

Tho' rapt and transient was the pause,
She scarce could keep to ground the while;
She felt like heaving thistle-down,
Hung to the earth by viewless pile.

The beauteous stranger turned his face
Unto the eastern streamers sheen;
He seemed to eye the ruby star
That rose above the Eildon green.

He spread his right hand to the heaven,
And he bade the maid not look behind,
But keep her face to the dark blue even:
And away they bore upon the wind.

She did not linger, she did not look,
For in a moment they were gone;
But she thought she saw her very form
Stretched on the greenwood's lap alone.

As ever you saw the meteor speed,
Or the arrow cleave the yielding wind,
Away they sprung, and the breezes sung,
And they left the gloaming star behind:

And eastward, eastward still they bore,
Along the night's gray canopy;
And the din of the world died away,
And the landscape faded on the e'e.

[1] Now vulgarly called Carterhaugh.

They had marked the dark blue waters lie
Like curved lines on many a vale;
And they hung on the shelve of a saffron cloud,
That scarcely moved in the slumbering gale.

They turned their eyes to the heaven above,
And the stars blazed bright as they drew nigh;
And they looked to the darksome world below,
But all was gray obscurity.

They could not trace the hill nor dale,
Nor could they ken where the greenwood lay;
But they saw a thousand shadowy stars,
In many a winding watery way;
And they better knew where the rivers ran
Than if it had been the open day.

They looked to the western shores afar,
But the light of day they could not see;
And the halo of the evening star
Sank like a crescent on the sea.

Then onward, onward fast they bore
On the yielding winds so light and boon,
To meet the climes that bred the day,
And gave the glow to the gilded moon.

Long had she chambered in the deep,
To spite the maidens of the main,
But now frae the merman's couch she sprang,
And blushed upon her still domain.

When first from out the sea she peeped,
She kythed like maiden's gouden kemb,
And the sleepy waves washed o'er her brow,
And bell'd her cheek wi' the briny faem.

But the yellow leme spread up the lift,
And the stars grew dim before her e'e;
And up arose the Queen of Night
In all her solemn majesty.

Oh! Mary's heart was blithe to lie
Above the ocean wastes reclined,
Beside her lovely guide so high,
On the downy bosom of the wind.

She saw the shades and gleams so bright
Play o'er the deep incessantly,
Like streamers of the norland way,
The lights that danced on the quaking sea.

She saw the wraith of the waning moon,
Trembling and pale it seemed to lie;
It was not round like golden shield,
Nor like her monlded orb on high.

Her image cradled on the wave,
Scarce bore similitude the while:
It was a line of silver light,
Stretched on the deep for many a mile.

The lovely youth beheld with joy
That Mary loved such scenes to view;
And away, and away they journeyed on,
Faster than wild bird ever flew.

Before the tide, before the wind,
The ship speeds swiftly o'er the faem;
And the sailor sees the shores fly back,
And weens his station still the same:

Beyond that speed ten thousand times,
By the marled streak and the cloudlet brown,
Pass'd our aerial travellers on
In the wan light of the waning moon.

They kept aloof as they passed her bye,
For their views of the world were not yet done;
But they saw her mighty mountain form
Like Cheviot in the setting sun.

And the stars and the moon fled west away,
So swift o'er the vaulted sky they shone;
They seemed like fiery rainbows reared,
In a moment seen, in a moment gone.

Yet Mary Lee as easy felt
As if on silken couch she lay;
And soon on a rosy film they hung,
Above the beams of the breaking day.

And they saw the chambers of the sun,
And the angels of the dawning ray
Draw the red curtains from the dome,
The glorious dome of the God of Day.

And the youth a slight obeisance made,
And seemed to bend upon his knee:
The holy vow he whispering said
Sunk deep in the heart of Mary Lee.

I may not say the prayer he prayed,
Nor of its wondrous tendency;
But it proved that the half the bedesmen said
Was neither true nor ever could be.[1]

Sweet breaks the day o'er Harlaw cairn,
On many an ancient peel and barrow,
On bracken hill, and lonely tarn,
Along the greenwood glen of Yarrow.

Oft there had Mary viewed with joy
The rosy streaks of light unfurled:
Oh! think how glowed the virgin's breast,
Hung o'er the profile of the world;

On battlement of storied cloud
That floated o'er the dawn serene,
To pace along with angel tread,
And on the rainbow's arch to lean.

Her cheek lay on its rosy rim,
Her bosom pressed the yielding blue,
And her fair robes of heavenly make
Were sweetly tinged with every hue.

[1] The extravagant and heterodox position pretended to be established throughout the poem, of the throne of the Almighty being placed in the centre of the sun, must be viewed only as of a piece with the rest of the imaginary scenes exhibited in the work; infinitude and omnipresence being attributes too sacred and too boundless for admission into an enthusiast's dream.

And there they lay, and there beheld
The glories of the opening morn
Spread o'er the eastern world afar,
Where winter wreath was never borne.

And they saw the blossom-loaded trees,
And gardens of perennial blow
Spread their fair bosoms to the day,
In dappled pride, and endless glow.

These came and passed, for the earth rolled on,
But still on the brows of the air they hung:
The scenes of glory they now beheld
May scarce by mortal bard be sung.

It was not the hues of the marbled sky,
Nor the gorgeous kingdoms of the East,
Nor the thousand blooming isles that lie
Like specks on the mighty ocean's breast:

It was the dwelling of that God
Who oped the welling springs of time;
Seraph and cherubim's abode;
The Eternal's throne of light sublime.

The virgin saw her radiant guide
On nature look with kindred eye;
But whenever he turned him to the sun,
He bowed with deep solemnity.

And ah! she deemed him heathen born,
Far from her own nativity,
In lands beneath the southern star,
Beyond the sun, beyond the sea.

And aye she watched with wistful eye,
But durst not question put the while;
He marked her mute anxiety,
And o'er his features beamed the smile.

He took her slender hand in his,
And swift as fleets the stayless mind,
They scaled the glowing fields of day,
And left the elements behind.

When past the firmament of air,
Where no attractive influence came;
There was no up, there was no down,
But all was space, and all the same.[1]

The first green world that they passed by
Had 'habitants of mortal mould;
For they saw the rich men and the poor,
And they saw the young and they saw the old.

But the next green world the twain pass'd by,
They seemed of some superior frame;
For all were in the bloom of youth,
And all their radiant robes the same.

And Mary saw the groves and trees,
And she saw the blossoms thereupon;
But she saw no grave in all the land,
Nor church, nor yet a church-yard stone.

That pleasant land is lost in light,
To every searching mortal eye;
So nigh the sun its orbit sails,
That on his breast it seems to lie.

And though its light be dazzling bright,
The warmth was gentle, mild, and bland,
Such as on summer days may be
Far up the hills of Scottish land.

And Mary Lee longed much to stay
In that blest land of love and truth,
So nigh the fount of life and day;
That land of beauty and of youth.

"O maiden of the wistful mind,
Here it behoves not to remain;
But Mary, yet the time will come
When thou shalt see this land again.

"Thou art a visitant beloved
Of God and every holy one;
And thou shalt travel on with me,
Around the spheres, around the sun,
To see what maid hath never seen,
And do what maid hath never done."

Thus spoke her fair and comely guide,
And took as erst her lily hand;
And soon in holy ecstasy
On mountains of the sun they stand.

Here I must leave the beauteous twain,
Casting their raptured eyes abroad
Around the valleys of the sun,
And all the universe of God:

And I will bear my hill-harp hence,
And hang it on its ancient tree;
For its wild warblings ill become
The scenes that oped to Mary Lee.

Thou holy harp of Judah's land,
That hung the willow boughs upon,
Oh leave the bowers on Jordan's strand,
And cedar groves of Lebanon;

That I may sound thy sacred string,
Those chords of mystery sublime,
That chimed the songs of Israel's King,
Songs that shall triumph over time.

Pour forth the trancing notes again,
That wont of yore the soul to thrill,
In tabernacles of the plain,
Or heights of Zion's holy hill.

[1] A friend of mine from the country, himself a poet, made particular objections to this stanza, on the ground of its being false and unphilosophical; "For ye ken, sir," said he, "that wherever a man may be, or can possibly be, whether in a bodily or spiritual state, there maun aye be a firmament aboon his head, and something or other below his feet. In short, it is impossible for a being to be anywhere in the boundless universe in which he winna find baith an *up* and a *down*." I was obliged to give in, but was so much amused with the man's stubborn incredulity, that I introduced it again in the last part.

Oh come, ethereal timbrel meet,
In shepherd's hand thou dost delight;
On Kedar hills thy strain was sweet,
And sweet on Bethlehem's plain by night:
And when thy tones the land shall hear,
And every heart conjoins with thee,
The mountain lyre that lingers near
Will lend a wandering melody.

PART SECOND.

Harp of Jerusalem! how shall my hand
Awake thy hallelujahs?—How begin
The song that tells of light ineffable,
And of the dwellers there; the fountain pure
And source of all, where bright archangels dwell,
And where, in unapproached pavilion, framed
Of twelve deep veils, and every veil composed
Of thousand thousand lustres, sits enthroned
The God of Nature?—O thou harp of Salem,
Where shall my strain begin?
Soft let it be,
And simple as its own primeval airs;
And, minstrel, when on angel wing thou soar'st,
Then will the harp of David rise with thee.

In that fair heaven the mortal virgin stood
Beside her lovely guide, Cela his name.
Yes, deem it heaven, for not the ample sky
As seen from earth, could slight proportion bear
To those bright regions of eternal day,
Once they are gained—so sweet the breeze of life
Breathed through the groves of amaranth—so sweet
The very touch of that celestial land.
Soon as the virgin trode thereon she felt
Unspeakable delight—sensations new
Thrilled her whole frame; as one who his life long
Hath in a dark and chilly dungeon pined
Feels when restored to freedom and the sun.

Upon a mount they stood of wreathy light,
Which cloud had never rested on, nor hues
Of night had ever shaded; thence they saw
The motioned universe, that wheeled around
In fair confusion. Raised as they were now
To the high fountain-head of light and vision,
Where'er they cast their eyes abroad they found
The light behind, the object still before;
And on the rarified and pristine rays
Of vision borne, their piercing sight passed on
Intense and all unbounded—onward!—onward!
No cloud to intervene, no haze to dim,
Or nigh or distant it was all the same;
For distance lessened not.—Oh what a scene,
To see so many goodly worlds upborne,
Around!—around!—all turning their green bosoms
And glittering waters to that orb of life
On which our travellers stood, and all by that
Sustained and gladdened! By that orb sustained?
No—by the mighty everlasting One
Who in that orb resides, and round whose throne
Our journeyers now were hovering. But they kept
Aloof upon the skirts of heaven; for, strange
Though it appears, there was no heaven beside.
They saw all nature—all that was they saw;
But neither moon, nor stars, nor firmament,
Nor clefted galaxy was any more.
Worlds beyond worlds, with intermundane voids
That closed and opened as those worlds rolled on,
Were all that claimed existence: each of these,
From one particular point of the sun's orb,
Seemed pendent by some ray or viewless cord,
On which it twirled and swung with endless motion.

Oh! never did created being feel
Such rapt astonishment, as did this maid
Of earthly lineage, when she saw the plan
Of God's fair universe (himself enthroned
In light she dared not yet approach!), from whence
He viewed the whole, and with a father's care
Upheld and cherished. Wonder seemed it none
That Godhead should discern each thing minute
That moved on his creation, when the eyes
Which he himself had made could thus perceive
All these broad orbs turn their omniferous breasts,
And sun them in their Maker's influence.
Oh! it was sweet to see their ample vales,
Their yellow mountains, and their winding streams,
All basking in the beams of light and life!

Each one of all these worlds seemed the abode
Of intellectual beings; but their forms,
Their beauty, and their natures varied all.
And in these worlds there were broad oceans rolled,
And branching seas: some wore the hues of gold,
And some of emerald or of burnished glass;
And there were seas that keel had never ploughed,
Nor had the shadow of a veering sail
Scared their inhabitants—for slumbering shades
And spirits brooded on them.

"Cela, speak,"
Said the delighted but inquiring maid,
"And tell me which of all these worlds I see
Is that we lately left? For I would fain
Note how far more extensive 'tis and fair
Than all the rest. Little, alas! I know
Of it, save that it is a right fair globe
Diversified and huge, and that afar,
In one sweet corner of it, lies a spot
I dearly love, where Tweed from distant moors
Far travelled flows in murmuring majesty,
And Yarrow, rushing from her bosky banks,
Hurries with headlong haste to the embrace

Of her more stately sister of the hills.
Ah! yonder 'tis!—now I perceive it well,"
Said she with ardent voice, bending her eye,
And stretching forth her arm to a broad globe
That basked in the light—"Yonder it is!
I know the Caledonian mountains well,
And mark the moony braes and curved heights
Above the lone Saint Mary. Cela, speak;
Is not that globe the world where I was born,
And yon the land of my nativity?"
She turned around her beauteous earnest face
With asking glance, but soon that glance withdrew,
And silent looked abroad on glowing worlds;
For she beheld a smile on Cela's face,
A smile that might an angel's face become,
When listening to the boasted, pigmy skill
Of high presuming man. She looked abroad,
But nought distinctly marked, nor durst her eye
Again meet his, although that way her face
So near was turned; one glance might have read more,
But yet that glance was staid. Pleased to behold
Her virgin modesty and simple grace,
His hand upon her flexile shoulder pressed
In kind and friendly guise, he thus began:

"My lovely ward, think not I deem your quest
Impertinent or trivial—well aware
Of all the longings of humanity
Toward the first, haply the only scenes
Of nature e'er beheld or understood;
Where the immortal and unquenched mind
First oped its treasures; and the longing soul
Breathed its first yearnings of eternal hope.
I know it all; nor do I deem it strange,
In such a wilderness of moving spheres,
Thou should'st mistake the world that gave thee birth.
Prepare to wonder, and prepare to grieve:
For I perceive that thou hast deemed the earth
The fairest and the most material part
Of God's creation. Mark yon cloudy spot,
Which yet thine eye hath never rested on;
And though not long the viewless golden cord
That chains it to this heaven, yclept the sun,
It seems a thing subordinate—a sphere
Unseemly and forbidding—'tis the earth.
What think'st thou now of thy almighty Maker,
And of this goodly universe of his?"

Down sunk the virgin's eye—her heart seemed warped
Deep, deep in meditation, while her face
Denoted mingled sadness. 'Twas a thought
She trembled to express. At length with blush,
And faltering tongue, she mildly thus replied:—

"I see all these fair worlds inhabited
By beings of intelligence and mind;
O Cela, tell me this—Have they all fallen,
And sinned like us? And has a living God
Bled in each one of all these peopled worlds?
Or only on yon dank and dismal spot
Hath one Redeemer suffered for them all?"[1]

"Hold, hold—no more!—thou talk'st thou knowest not what,"
Said her conductor with a fervent mien;
"More thou shalt know hereafter; but meanwhile
This truth conceive, that God must ever deal
With men as men—those things by him decreed,
Or compassed by permission, ever tend
To draw his creatures, whom he loves, to goodness;
For he is all benevolence, and knows
That in the paths of virtue and of love
Alone can final happiness be found.
More thou shalt know hereafter—pass we on
Around this glorious heaven, till by degrees
Thy frame and vision are so subtilized,
As that thou may'st the inner regions near
Where dwell the holy angels; where the saints
Of God meet in assembly; seraphs sing;
And thousand harps, in unison complete,
With one vibration sound Jehovah's name."

Far far away, through regions of delight
They journeyed on—not like the earthly pilgrim,
Fainting with hunger, thirst, and burning feet,
But, leaning forward on the liquid air
Like twin-born eagles, skimmed the fields of light,
Circling the pales of heaven. In joyous mood,
Sometimes through groves of shady depth they strayed,
Arm linked in arm, as lovers walk the earth;
Or rested in the bowers where roses hung
And flowrets holding everlasting sweetness.
And they would light upon celestial hills
Of beauteous softened green, and converse hold
With beings like themselves in form and mind;
Then, rising lightly from the velvet breast
Of the green mountain, down upon the vales
They swooped amain by lawns and streams of life;
Then over mighty hills an arch they threw
Formed like the rainbow. Never since the time
That God outspread the glowing fields of heaven
Were two such travellers seen! In all that way
They saw new visitants hourly arrive
From other worlds, in that auspicious land
To live for ever. These had sojourned far
From world to world more pure—till by degrees
After a thousand years' progression, they
Stepped on the confines of that land of life,
Of bliss unspeakable and evermore.

Yet, after such probation of approach,
So exquisite the feelings of delight

[1] It has often been suggested to me that the dangerous doubt expressed in these four lines, has proved a text to all Dr. Chalmers' sublime astronomical sermons. I am far from having the vanity to suppose this to be literally true; but if it had even the smallest share in turning his capacious and fervent mind to that study, I have reason to estimate them as the most valuable lines I ever wrote.

Those heavenly regions yielded, 'twas beyond
Their power of sufferance.—Overcome with bliss,
They saw them wandering in amazement on,
With eyes that took no image on their spheres,
Misted in light and glory; or laid down,
Stretched on the sward of heaven in ecstasy.

Yet still their half-formed words and breathings were
Of one that loved them, and had brought them home
With him in full felicity to dwell.

To sing of all the scenes our travellers saw,
An angel's harp were meet, which mortal hand
Must not assay. These scenes must be concealed
From mortal fancy and from mortal eye
Until our weary pilgrimage is done.

They kept the outer heaven, for it behoved
Them so to do; and in that course beheld
Immeasurable vales, all colonized
From worlds subjacent. Passing inward still
Toward the centre of the heavens, they saw
The dwellings of the saints of ancient days,
And martyrs for the right—men of all creeds,
Features, and hues. Much did the virgin muse,
And much reflect on this strange mystery,
So ill conform to all she had been taught
From infancy to think, by holy men;
Till looking round upon the spacious globes
Dependent on that heaven of light, and all
Rejoicing in their God's beneficence,
These words spontaneously burst from her lips:
"Child that I was, ah! could my stinted mind
Harbour the thought, that the Almighty's love,
Life, and salvation could to single sect
Of creatures be confined, all his alike!"

Last of them all, in ample circle spread
Around the palaces of heaven, they passed
The habitations of those radiant tribes
That never in the walks of mortal life
Had sojourned, or with human passions toiled.
Pure were they framed; and round the skirts of heaven
At first were placed, till other dwellers came
From other spheres, by human beings nursed;
Then inward those withdrew, more meet to dwell
In beatific regions. These again
Followed by more, in order regular,
Neared to perfection. It was most apparent
Through all created nature, that each being,
From the archangel to the meanest soul
Cherished by savage, caverned in the snow,
Or panting on the brown and sultry desert
That all were in progression, moving on
Still to perfection. In conformity
The human soul is modelled—hoping still
In something onward; something far beyond
It fain would grasp,—nor shall that hope be lost!
The soul shall hold it; she shall hope, and yearn,
And grasp, and gain, for times and ages, more
Than thought can fathom or proud science climb.

At length they reached a vale of wondrous form
And dread dimensions, where the tribes of heaven
Assembly held, each in its proper sphere
And order placed. That vale extended far
Across the heavenly regions, and its form
A tall gazoon, or level pyramid.
Along its borders palaces were ranged,
All fronted with the thrones of beauteous seraphs,
Who sat with eyes turned to the inmost point
Leaning upon their harps; and all those thrones
Were framed of burning crystal, where appeared
In mingled gleam millions of dazzling hues.

Still, as the valley narrowed to a close,
These thrones increased in grandeur and in glory
On either side, until the inmost two
Rose so sublimely high, that every arch
Was ample as the compass of that bow
That, on dark cloud, bridges the vales of earth.

The columns seemed ingrained with gold, and branched
With many lustres, whose each single lamp
Shone like the sun as from the earth beheld;
And each particular column, placed upon
A northern hill, would cap the polar wain.
There sat, half-shrouded in incessant light
The great archangels, nighest to the throne
Of the Almighty; for—oh dreadful view!—
Betwixt these two, closing the lengthened files,
Stood the pavilion of the eternal God!
Himself unseen, in tenfold splendours veiled,
The least unspeakable, so passing bright
That even the eyes of angels turned thereon
Grow dim, and round them transient darkness swims.

Within the verge of that extended region
Our travellers stood. Farther they could not press,
For round the light and glory threw a pale,
Repellent, but to them invisible;
Yet myriads were within of purer frame.

Ten thousand thousand messengers arrived
From distant worlds, the missioners of heaven,
Sent forth to countervail malignant sprites
That roam existence. These gave their report,
Not at the throne, but at the utmost seats
Of these long files of throned seraphim,
By whom the word was passed. Then fast away
Flew the commissioned spirits, to renew
Their watch and guardship in far distant lands.
They saw them, in directions opposite,
To every point of heaven glide away
Like flying stars; or, far adown the steep,
Gleam like small lines of light.

Now was the word
Given out, from whence they knew not, that all tongues,

Kindreds, and tribes, should join, with one accord,
In hymn of adoration and acclaim,
To Him that sat upon the throne of heaven,
Who framed, saved, and redeemed them to himself!

Then all the countless hosts obeisance made.
And with their faces turned unto the throne
Stood up erect, while all their coronals
From off their heads were reverently upborne.
Our earth-born visitant quaked every limb.
The angels touched their harps with gentle hand
As prelude to begin—then, all at once,
With full o'erwhelming swell the strain arose;
And pealing high rolled o'er the throned lists
And tuneful files, as if the sun itself
Welled forth the high and holy symphony!
All heaven beside was mute: the streams stood still
And did not murmur—the light wandering winds
Withheld their motion in the midst of heaven,
Nor stirred the leaf, but hung in breathless trance
Where first the sounds assailed them; even the
windows
Of God's pavilion seemed to open wide
And drink the harmony.

Few were the strains
The virgin pilgrim heard, for they o'erpowered
Her every sense; and down she sunk entranced
By too supreme delight, and all to her
Was lost; she saw nor heard not—it was gone!

Long did she lie beside a cooling spring
In her associate's arms, before she showed
Motion or life; and when she first awoke
It was in dreaming melody—low strains
Half sung, half uttered, hung upon her breath.

"Oh! is it past?" said she; "shall I not hear
That song of heaven again?—Then all beside
Of being is unworthy: take me back,
Where I may hear that lay of glory flow,
And die away in it. My soul shall mix
With its harmonious numbers, and dissolve
In fading cadence at the gates of light."

Back near the borders of that sacred vale
Cautious they journeyed; and at distance heard
The closing anthem of that great assembly
Of saints and angels. First the harps awoke
A murmuring tremulous melody, that rose
Now high—now seemed to roll in waves away.
And aye between this choral hymn was sung,
"O! holy! holy! holy, just and true,
Art thou, Lord God Almighty! thou art he
Who was, and is, and evermore shall be!"
Then every harp, and every voice, at once
Resounded *Halleluiah!* so sublime,
That all the mountains of the northern heaven,
And they are many, sounded back the strain.

Oh! when the voices and the lyres were strained
To the rapt height, the full delirious swell,
Then did the pure elastic mounds of heaven
Quiver and stream with flickering radiance,
Like gossamers along the morning dew.
Still paused the choir, till the last echo crept
Into the distant hill—Oh it was sweet!
Beyond definement sweet! and never more
May ear of mortal list such heavenly strains,
While linked to erring frail humanity.

After much holy converse with the saints
And dwellers of the heaven, of that concerned
The ways of God with man, and wondrous truths
But half revealed to him, our sojourners
In holy awe withdrew. And now, no more
By circular and cautious route they moved,
But straight across the regions of the blest,
And storied vales of heaven did they advance,
On rapt ecstatic wing; and oft assayed
The seraph's holy hymn. As they passed by
The angels paused, and saints, that lay reposed
In bowers of paradise, upraised their heads
To list the passing music; for it went
Swift as the wild-bee's note, that on the wing
Booms like unbodied voice along the gale.

At length upon the brink of heaven they stood;
There lingering, forward on the air they leaned
With hearts elate, to take one parting look
Of nature from its source, and converse hold
Of all its wonders. Not upon the sun,
But on the halo of bright golden air
That fringes it, they leaned, and talked so long,
That from contiguous worlds they were beheld
And wondered at as beams of living light.

There all the motions of the ambient spheres
Were well observed, explained, and understood.
All save the mould of that mysterious chain
Which bound them to the sun—that God himself,
And he alone, could comprehend or wield.

While thus they stood or lay (for to the eyes
Of all their posture seemed these two between,
Bent forward on the wind, in graceful guise,
On which they seemed to press, for their fair robes
Were streaming far behind them) there passed by
A most erratic wandering globe, that seemed
To run with troubled aimless fury on.
The virgin, wondering, inquired the cause
And nature of that roaming meteor world.

When Cela thus:—"I can remember well
When yon was such a world as that you left:
A nursery of intellect, for those
Where matter lives not. Like these other worlds,
It wheeled upon its axle, and it swung
With wide and rapid motion. But the time
That God ordained for its existence run,
Its uses in that beautiful creation,
Where nought subsists in vain, remained no more.
The saints and angels knew of it, and came
In radiant files, with awful reverence,

Unto the verge of heaven where we now stand,
To see the downfall of a sentenced world.
Think of the impetus that urges on
These ponderous spheres, and judge of the event.
Just in the middle of its swift career,
The Almighty snapt the golden cord in twain
That hung it to the heaven—creation sobbed,
And a spontaneous shriek rang on the hills
Of these celestial regions. Down amain
Into the void the outcast world descended,
Wheeling and thundering on![1] Its troubled seas
Were churned into a spray, and, whizzing, flurred
Around it like a dew. The mountain tops
And ponderous rocks were off impetuous flung,
And clattered down the steeps of night for ever

"Away into the sunless starless void
Rushed the abandoned world; and through its caves
And rifted channels airs of chaos sung.
The realms of night were troubled—for the stillness
Which there from all eternity had reigned
Was rudely discomposed; and moaning sounds,
Mixed with a whistling howl, were heard afar
By darkling spirits. Still with stayless force,
For years and ages, down the wastes of night
Rolled the impetuous mass!—of all its seas
And superficies disencumbered,
It boomed along, till by the gathering speed,
Its furnaced mines and hills of walled sulphur
Were blown into a flame, when meteor-like,
Bursting away upon an arching track,
Wide as the universe, again it sealed
The dusky regions. Long the heavenly hosts
Had deemed the globe extinct, nor thought of it,
Save as an instance of Almighty power:
Judge of their wonder and astonishment,
When far as heavenly eyes can see, they saw,
In yon blue void, that hideous world appear,
Showering thin flame, and shining vapour forth
O'er half the breadth of heaven!—The angels paused,
And all the nations trembled at the view.

"But great is he who rules them!—He can turn
And lead it all unhurtful through the spheres,
Signal of pestilence or wasting sword
That ravage and deface humanity.

"The time will come when, in like wise, the earth
Shall be cut off from God's fair universe;
Its end fulfilled. But when that time shall be,
From man, from saint, and angel is concealed."

Here ceased the converse. To a tale like this
What converse could succeed!—They turned around,
And kneeling on the brow of heaven, there paid
Due adoration to that Holy One
Who framed and rules the elements of nature.
Then like two swans that far on wing have scaled
The Alpine heights to gain their native lake,
At length, perceiving far below their eye
The beauteous silvery speck, they slack their wings,
And softly sink adown the incumbent air:
So sunk our lovely pilgrims, from the verge
Of the fair heaven, down the streamered sky,
Far other scenes and other worlds to view.

PART THIRD.

Imperial England, of the ocean born,
Who from the isles beyond the dawn of morn,
To where waste oceans wash Peruvia's shore,
Hast from all nations drawn thy boasted lore!
Helm of the world, whom seas and isles obey,
Though high thy honours, and though far thy sway,
Thy harp I crave, unfearful of thy frown;
Well may'st thou lend what erst was not thine own.

Come, thou old bass—I love thy lordly swell,
With Dryden's twang, and Pope's malicious knell:
But now, so sore thy brazen chords are worn,
By peer, by pastor, and by bard forlorn;
By every grub that harps for venal ore,
And crab that grovels on the sandy shore:
I wot not if thy maker's aim has been
A harp, a fiddle, or a tambourine.

Come, leave these lanes and sinks beside the sea;
Come to the silent moorland dale with me;
And thou shalt pour, along the mountain hoar,
A strain its echoes never waked before;
Thou shalt be strung where greenwood never grew,
Swept by the winds, and mellowed by the dew.

Sing of the globes our travellers viewed, that lie
Around the sun, enveloped in the sky:
Thy music slightly must the veil withdraw
From lands they visited and scenes they saw;
From lands, where love and goodness ever dwell;
Where famine, blight, or mildew never fell;
Where face of man is ne'er o'erspread with gloom,
And woman smiles for ever in her bloom:
And thou must sing of wicked worlds beneath,
Where flit the visions and the hues of death.

The first they saw, though different far the scene,
Compared with that where they had lately been,
To all its dwellers yielded full delight.
Long was the day, and long and still the night;

[1] This whole account of the formation of a comet has been copied into several miscellaneous works, and has been often loudly censured for its utter extravagance by such as knew not the nature of the work from which it was taken. After all, I cannot help regarding the supposition as perfectly ostensible.

The groves were dark and deep, the waters still;
The raving streamlets murmured from the hill.
It was the land where faithful lovers dwell,
Beyond the grave's unseemly sentinel;
Where, free of jealousy, their mortal bane,
And all the ills of sickness and of pain,
In love's delights they bask without alloy—
The night their transport, and the day their joy.
The broadened sun, in chamber and alcove,
Shines daily on their morning couch of love;
And in the evening grove, while linnets sing,
And silent bats wheel round on flittering wing,
Still in the dear embrace their souls are lingering.

"Oh! tell me, Cela," said the earthly maid,
"Must all these beauteous dames like woman fade?
In our imperfect world, it is believed
That those who most have loved the most have grieved;
That love can every power of earth control,
Can conquer kings and chain the hero's soul;
While all the woes and pains that women prove,
Have each their poignance and their source from love.
What law of nature has reversed the doom,
If these may always love and always bloom?"

"Look round thee, maid beloved, and thou shalt see,
As journeying o'er this happy world with me,
That no decrepitude nor age is here;
No autumn comes the human bloom to sere;
For these have lived in worlds of mortal breath,
And all have passed the dreary bourne of death:
Can'st thou not mark their purity of frame,
Though still their forms and features are the same?"

Replied the maid, "no difference I can scan,
Save in the fair meridian port of man,
And woman fresh as roses newly sprung:
If these have died, they all have died when young."

"Thou art as artless as thy heart is good;
This in thy world is not yet understood:
But wheresoe'er we wander to and fro,
In heaven above or in the deep below,
What thou misconstruest I shall well explain,
Be it in angel's walk or mortal reign,
In sun, moon, stars, in mountain, or in main.

"Know then, that every globe which thou hast seen,
Varied with valleys, seas, and forests green,
Are all conformed, in subtilty of clime,
To beings sprung from out the womb of time;
And all the living groups where'er they be,
Of worlds which thou hast seen or thou may'st see,
Wherever sets the eve and dawns the morn,
Are all of mankind—all of woman born.
The globes from heaven which most at distance lie
Are nurseries of life to these so nigh;
In those the minds for evermore to be
Must dawn and rise with smiling infancy.

"Thus 'tis ordained—these grosser regions yield
Souls, thick as blossoms of the vernal field,
Which after death, in relative degree,
Fairer or darker as their minds may be,
To other worlds are led, to learn and strive
Till to perfection all at last arrive.
This once conceived, the ways of God are plain,
But thy unyielding race in errors will remain.

"These beauteous dames, who glow with love unstained,
Like thee were virgins, but not so remained.
Not to thy sex this sere behest is given—
They are the garden of the God of heaven:
Of beauties numberless and woes the heir.
The tree was reared immortal fruit to bear;
And she, all selfish choosing to remain,
Nor share of love the pleasures and the pain,
Was made and cherished by her God in vain.
She sinks into the dust a nameless thing,
No son the requiem o'er her grave to sing;
While she who gives to human beings birth,
Immortal here, is living still on earth—
Still in her offspring lives, to fade and bloom,
Flourish and spread through ages long to come.

"Now mark me, maiden—why that wistful look?
Though woman must those pains and passions brook,
Beloved of God and fairest of his plan,
Note how she smiles, superior still to man.
As well it her behoves; for was not he
Lulled on her breast and nursed upon her knee?
Her foibles and her failings may be rife,
While toiling through the snares and ills of life;
But he who framed her nature knows her pains,
Her heart dependant, and tumultuous veins,
And many faults the world heap on her head,
Will never there be harshly visited.
Proud haughty man, the nursling of her care,
Must more than half her crimes and errors bear.
If flowrets droop and fade before their day;
If others sink neglected in the clay:
If trees too rankly earthed too rathly blow,
And others neither fruit nor blossom know,
Let human reason equal judgment frame:
Is it the flower, the tree, or gardener's blame?

"Thou see'st them lovely—so they will remain;
For when the soul and body meet again,
No 'vantage will be held of age, or time,
United at their fairest fullest prime.
The form when purest, and the soul most sage,
Beauty with wisdom shall have heritage,
The form of comely youth, the experience of age.

"When to thy kindred thou shalt this relate
Of man's immortal and progressive state,
No credit thou wilt gain; for they are blind,
And would, presumptuous, the Eternal bind,
Either perpetual blessings to bestow,
Or plunge the souls he framed in endless woe.

"This is the land of lovers, known afar,
And named the Evening and the Morning Star.
Oft, with rapt eye, thou hast its rising seen,
Above the holy spires of old Lindeen;
And marked its tiny beam diffuse a hue
That tinged the paleness of the morning blue;
Ah! did'st thou deem it was a land so fair?
Or that such peaceful 'habitants were there!

"See'st thou yon gloomy sphere, thro' vapours dun,
That wades in crimson like the sultry sun!
There let us bend our course, and mark the fates
Of mighty warriors, and of warriors' mates;
For there they toil 'mid troubles and alarms,
The drums and trumpets sounding still to arms;
Till by degrees, when ages are outgone,
And happiness and comfort still unknown,
Like simple babes, the land of peace to win,
The task of knowledge sorrowful begin,
By the enlightened philosophic mind,
More than a thousand ages left behind.

"Oh what a world of vanity and strife!
For what avails the stage of mortal life,
If to the last the fading frame is worn,
The same unknowing creature it was born?
Where shall the spirit rest? where shall it go?
Or how enjoy a bliss it does not know?
It must be taught in darkness and in pain,
Or beg the bosom of a child again.
Knowledge of all, avails the human kind,
For all beyond the grave are joys of mind."

So swift and so untroubled was their flight,
'Twas like the journey of a dream by night;
And scarce had Mary ceased, with thought sedate,
To muse on woman's sacred estimate,
When on the world of warriors they alight,
Just on the confines of its day and night;
The purple light was waning west away,
And shoally darkness gained upon the day.

"I love that twilight," said the pilgrim fair,
"For more than earthly solemness is there.
See how the rubied waters winding roll;
A hoary doubtful hue involves the pole;
Uneasy murmurs float upon the wind,
And tenfold darkness rears its shades behind.

"And lo! where, wrapt in deep vermilion shroud,
The daylight slumbers on the western cloud:
I love the scene!—Oh let us onward steer,
The light our steeds, the wind our charioteer!
And on the downy cloud impetuous hurled,
We'll with the twilight ring this warrior world."

Along, along, along the nether sky,
The light before, the wreathed darkness nigh;
Along, along, through evening vapours blue,
Through tinted air and racks of drizzly dew,
The twain pursued their way, and heard afar
The moans and murmurs of the dying war;
The neigh of battle-steeds by field and wall,
That missed their generous comrades of the stall
Which, all undaunted, in the ranks of death,
Yielded, they knew not why, their honest breath;
And, far behind, the hill-wolf's hunger yell,
And watchword passed from drowsy sentinel.

Along, along, through mind's unwearied range,
It flies to the vicissitudes of change.
Our pilgrims of the twilight weary grew,
Transcendent was the scene, but never new;
They wheeled their rapid chariot from the light,
And pierced the bosom of the hideous night.

So thick the darkness, and its veil so swarth,
All hues were gone of heaven and of the earth:
The watch-fire scarce like gilded glow-worm seemed;
No moon nor star along the concave beamed;
Without a halo flaming meteors flew,
Scarce did they shed a sullen sulphury blue;
Whizzing they passed, by folded vapours crossed,
And in a sea of darkness soon were lost.

Like pilgrim birds that o'er the ocean fly,
When lasting night and polar storms are nigh,
Enveloped in a rayless atmosphere,
By northern shores uncertain course they steer;
O'er thousand darkling billows flap the wing,
Till far is heard the welcome murmuring
Of mountain waves, o'er waste of waters tossed,
In fleecy thunder fall on Albyn's coast.

So passed the pilgrims through impervious night,
Till, in a moment, rose before their sight
A bound impassable of burning levin,
A wall of flame that reached from earth to heaven.
It was the light shed from the bloody sun,
In bootless blaze upon that cloud so dun;
Its gloom was such as not to be oppressed,
That those perturbed spirits might have rest.

Now oped a scene, before but dimly seen,
A world of pride, of havoc, and of spleen;
A world of scathed soil and sultry air,
For industry and culture were not there.
The hamlets smoked in ashes on the plain;
The bones of men were bleaching in the rain;
And, piled in thousands, on the trenched heath
Stood warriors bent on vengeance and on death.

"Ah!" said the youth, "we timely come to spy
A scene momentous, and a sequel high!
For late arrived on this disquiet coast
A fiend, that in Tartarian gulf was tossed,
And held, in tumult and commotion fell,
The gnashing legions through the bounds of hell
For ages past; but now, by Heaven's decree,
The prelude of some dread event to be
Is hither sent like desolating brand,
The scourge of God, the terror of the land!
He seems the passive elements to guide,
And stars in courses fight upon his side.

"On yon high mountain will we rest and see
The omens of the times that are to be;
For all the wars of earth and deeds of weir
Are first performed by warrior spirits here;
So linked are souls by one eternal chain,
What these perform those needs must do again:
And thus the Almighty weighs each kingdom's date,
Each warrior's fortune, and each warrior's fate,
Making the future time with that has been
Work onward, rolling like a vast machine."

They sat them down on hills of Alpine form,
Above the whirlwind and the thunder-storm:
For in that land contiguous to the sun
The elements in wild obstruction run;
They saw the bodied flame the cloud impale,
Then river-like fleet down the sultry dale.
While basking in the sunbeam high they lay,
The hill was swathed in dark unseemly gray;
The downward rainbow hung across the rain,
And leaned its glowing arch upon the plain.

While thus they staid, they saw in wondrous wise
Armies and kings from out the cloud arise;
They saw great hosts and empires overrun,
War's wild extreme, and kingdoms lost and won:
The whole of that this age has lived to see,
With battles of the East long hence to be,
They saw distinct and plain, as human eye
Discerns the forms and objects passing by.
Long yet the time ere wasting war shall cease,
And all the world have liberty and peace!

The pilgrims moved not—word they had not said,
While this mysterious boding vision staid;
But now the virgin, with disturbed eye,
Besought solution of the prodigy.

"These all are future kings of earthly fame:
That wolfish fiend, from hell that hither came,
Over thy world in ages yet to be
Must desolation spread and slavery,
Till nations learn to know their estimate;
To be unanimous is to be great:
When right's own standard calmly is unfurled,
The people are the sovereigns of the world.

"Like one machine a nation's governing,
And that machine must have a moving spring;
But of what mould that moving spring should be.
'Tis the high right of nations to decree.
This mankind must be taught, though millions bleed,
That knowledge, truth, and liberty may spread."

"What meant the vision 'mid the darksome cloud?
Some spirits rose as from unearthly shroud,
And joined their warrior brethren of the free;
Two souls inspired each, and some had three?"

"These were the spirits of their brethren slain,
Who, thus permitted, rose and breathed again;
For still let reason this high truth recall,
The body's but a mould, the soul is all:
Those triple minds that all before them hurled,
Are called Silesians in this warrior world."

"Oh tell me, Cela, when shall be the time
That all the restless spirits of this clime,
Erring so widely in the search of bliss,
Shall win a milder, happier world than this?"

"Not till they learn, with humbled hearts, to see
The falsehood of their fuming vanity.
What is the soldier but an abject fool—
A king's, a tyrant's, or a statesman's tool?
Some patriot few there are—but ah, how rare!
For vanity or interest still is there;
Or blindfold levity directs his way—
A licensed murderer that kills for pay.
Though fruitless ages thus be overpast,
Truth, love, and knowledge, must prevail at last."

The pilgrims left that climate with delight,
Weary of battle and portentous sight.

It boots not all their wanderings to relate,
By globes immense and worlds subordinate,
For still my strain in mortal guise must flow:
Though swift as winged angels they might go,
The palled mind would meet no kind relay,
And dazzled fancy wilder by the way.

They found each clime with mental joys replete,
And all for which its 'habitants were meet.
They saw a watery world of sea and shore,
Where the rude sailor swept the flying oar,
And drove his bark like lightning o'er the main,
Proud of his prowess, of her swiftness vain;
Held revel on the shore with stormy glee,
Or sung his boisterous carol on the sea.

They saw the land where bards delighted stray,
And beauteous maids that love the melting lay;
One mighty hill they clomb with earnest pain,
For ever clomb but higher did not gain:
Their gladsome smiles were mixed with frowns severe;
For all were bent to sing, and none to hear.

Far in the gloom they found a world accursed,
Of all the globes the dreariest and the worst.
But there they could not sojourn, though they would,
For all the language was of mystic mood,
A jargon, nor conceived nor understood;
It was of deeds, respondents, and replies,
Dark quibbles, forms, and condescendencies:
And they would argue with vociferous breath,
For months and days, as if the point were death;
And when at last enforced to agree,
'Twas only how the argument should be!

They saw the land of bedesmen discontent,
Their frames their god, their tithes their testament;
And snarling critics bent with aspect sour
T' applaud the great and circumvent the poor;
And knowing patriots, with important face,
Raving aloud with gesture and grimace—

Their prize a land's acclaim, or proud and gainful place.
Then by a land effeminate they passed,
Where silks and odours floated in the blast:
A land of vain and formal compliment,
Where won the flippant belles and beaux magnificent.

They circled nature on their airy wain,
From God's own throne unto the realms of pain:
For there are prisons in the deep below,
Where wickedness sustains proportioned woe,
Nor more nor less; for the Almighty still
Suits to our life the goodness and the ill.

Oh! it would melt the living heart with woe,
Were I to sing the agonies below;
The hatred nursed by those who cannot part;
The hardened brow, the seared and sullen heart:
The still defenceless look, the stifled sigh,
The writhed lip, the staid despairing eye,
Which ray of hope may never lighten more,
Which cannot shun, yet dares not look before.
Oh! these are themes reflection would forbear,
Unfitting bard to sing or maid to hear;
Yet these they saw in downward realms prevail.
And listened many a sufferer's hapless tale,
Who all allowed that rueful misbelief
Had proved the source of their eternal grief;
And all the Almighty punisher arraigned
For keeping back that knowledge they disdained.

"Ah!" Cela said, as up the void they flew,
"The axiom's just—the inference is true;
Therefore no more let doubts thy mind enthral.
Through nature's range thou see'st a God in all:
Where is the mortal law that can restrain
The atheist's heart that broods o'er thoughts profane?
Soon fades the soul's and virtue's dearest tie,
When all the future closes from the eye."—
By all, the earth-born virgin plainly saw
Nature's unstaid, unalterable law;
That human life is but the infant stage
Of a progressive, endless pilgrimage
To woe, or state of bliss, by bard unsung,
At that eternal fount where being sprung.

When these wild wanderings all were past and done,
Just in the red beam of the parting sun,
Our pilgrims skimmed along the light of even,
Like flitting stars that cross the nightly heaven,
And lighting on the verge of Phillip plain,
They trode the surface of the world again.

Arm linked in arm, they walked to green Bowhill:
At their approach the woods and lawns grew still;
The little birds to brake and bush withdrew,
The merl away unto Blackandro flew;
The twilight held its breath in deep suspense,
And looked its wonder in mute eloquence.

They reached the bower, where first, at Mary's knee
Cela arose her guide through heaven to be.
All, all was still—no living thing was seen;
No human footstep marked the daisied green;
The youth looked round, as something were unmeet
Or wanting there to make their bliss complete.
They paused—they sighed—then with a silent awe
Walked onward to the halls of Carelha'.

They heard the squires and yeomen, all intent,
Talking of some mysterious event;
They saw the maidens in dejection mourn,
Scarce daring glance unto a yeoman turn.
Straight to the inner chamber they repair,
Mary beheld her widowed mother there,
Flew to her arms, to kiss her and rejoice:
Alas! she saw her not nor heard her voice,
But sat unmoved with many a bitter sigh,
Tears on her cheek, and sorrow in her eye!
In sable weeds her lady form was clad,
And the white lawn waved mournful round her head.
Mary beheld, arranged in order near,
The very robes she last on earth did wear;
And shrinking from the disregarded kiss,
"Oh, tell me, Cela!—tell me what is this?"

"Fair maiden of the pure and guileless heart,
As yet thou knowest not how nor what thou art;—
Come, I will lead thee to yon hoary pile,
Where sleep thy kindred in their storied isle:
There I must leave thee in this world below;
'Tis meet thy land these holy truths should know:
But, Mary, yield not thou to bootless pain,
Soon we shall meet, and never part again."

He took her hand, she dared not disobey,
But, half reluctant, followed him away.
They paced along on Ettrick's margin green,
And reached the hoary fane of old Lindeen:
It was a scene to curdle maiden's blood—
The massy church-yard gate wide open stood;
The stars were up, the valley steeped in dew.
The baleful bat in silent circles flew;
No sound was heard, except the lonely rail
Harping his ordinal adown the dale;
And soft and slow upon the breezes light
The rush of Ettrick breathed along the night.
Dark was the pile, and green the tombs beneath,
And dark the gravestones on the sward of death.

Within the railed space appeared to view
A grave new opened—thitherward they drew;
And there beheld, within its mouldy womb,
A living, moving tenant of the tomb!
It was an aged monk, uncouth to see,
Who held a sheeted corpse upon his knee,
And busy, busy, with the form was he!
At their approach he uttered howl of pain,
Till echoes groaned it from the holy fane,
Then fled amain.—Ah! Cela, too, is gone;
And Mary stands within the grave alone!
With her fair guide her robes of heaven are fled,
And round her fall the garments of the dead!

Here I must seize my ancient harp again,
And chaunt a simple tale, a most uncourtly strain.

PART FOURTH.

The night-wind is sleeping, the forest is still,
The blare of the heath-cock has sunk on the hill,
Beyond the gray cairn of the moor is his rest,
On the red heather-bloom he has pillowed his breast;
There soon with his note the gray dawning he'll cheer;
But Mary of Carel' that note will not hear!

The night-wind is still, and the moon in the wane,
The river-lark sings on the verge of the plain;
So lonely his plaint by the motionless reed
It sounds like an omen or tale of the dead;
Like a warning of death it falls on the ear
Of those who are wandering the woodlands in fear;
For the maidens of Carelha' wander, and cry
On their young lady's name, with the tear in their eye.
The gates had been shut and the mass had been sung,
But Mary was missing, the beauteous and young:
And she had been seen in the evening still
By woodman, alone, in the groves of Bowhill.

Oh, were not these maidens in terror and pain?
They knew the third night of the moon in the wane:
They knew on that night that the spirits were free;
That revels of fairies were held on the lea;
And heard their small bugles, with eirysome croon,
As lightly they rode on the beam of the moon.
Oh! woe to the wight that abides their array!
And woe to the maiden that comes in their way!

The maidens returned all hopeless and wan:
The yeomen they rode, and the pages they ran;
The Ettrick and Yarrow they searched up and down,
The hamlet, the cot, and the old borough town;
And thrice the bedesman renewed the host;
But the dawn returned—and Mary was lost!

Her lady mother, distracted and wild
For the loss of her loved, her only child,
With all her maidens tracked the dew—
Well Mary's secret bower she knew.
Oft had she traced, with fond regard,
Her darling to that grove, and heard
Her orisons the green bough under,
And turned aside with fear and wonder.

Oh! but their hearts were turned to stone,
When they saw her stretched on the sward alone,
Prostrate, without a word or motion,
As if in calm and deep devotion.
They called her name with trembling breath;
But ah! her sleep was the sleep of death:
They laid their hands on her cheek composed;
But her cheek was cold and her eye was closed:
They laid their hands upon her breast,
But the playful heart had sunk to rest;
And they raised an eldritch wail of sorrow,
That startled the hinds on the braes of Yarrow.

And yet, when they viewed her comely face,
Each line remained of beauty and grace;
No death-like features it disclosed,
For the lips were met, and the eyes were closed.
'Twas pale—but the smile was on the cheek;
'Twas modelled all as in act to speak.
It seemed as if each breeze that blew,
The play of the bosom would renew;
As nature's momentary strife
Would wake that form to beauty and life.

It is borne away with fear and awe
To the lordly halls of Carelha',
And lies on silken couch at rest—
The mother there is constant guest,
For hope still lingers in her breast.

O, seraph Hope! that here below
Can nothing dear to the last forego!
When we see the forms we fain would save
Wear step by step adown to the grave,
Still hope a lambent gleam will shed
Over the last, the dying bed:
And even, as now, when the soul's away,
It flutters and lingers o'er the clay.
O Hope! thy range was never expounded!
'Tis not by the grave that thou art bounded!

The leech's art and the bedesman's prayer
Are all misspent—no life is there!
Between her breasts they dropped the lead,
And the cord in vain begirt her head;
Yet still on that couch her body lies,
Though another moon has claimed the skies:
For once the lykewake maidens saw,
As the dawn arose on Carelha',
A movement soft the sheets within,
And a gentle shivering of the chin.

All earthly hope at last outworn,
The body to the tomb was borne;
The last pale flowers in the grave were flung;
The mass was said and the requiem sung;
And the turf that was ever green to be
Lies over the dust of Mary Lee.

Deep fell the eve on old Lindeen;
Loud creaked the rail in the clover green:
The new moon from the west withdrew—
Oh! well the monk of Lindeen knew
That Mary's winding-sheet was lined
With many fringe of the gold refined:
That in her bier behoved to be
A golden cross and a rosary;
Of pearl beads full many a string,
And on every finger a diamond ring.
The holy man no scruples staid;
For within that grave was useless laid

Riches that would a saint entice—
'Twas worth a convent's benefice!

He took the spade, and away he is gone
To the church-yard, darkling and alone;
His brawny limbs the grave bestride,
And he shovelled the mools and the bones aside;
Of the dust or the dead he stood not in fear,
But he stooped in the grave and he opened the bier;
And he took the jewels, of value high,
And he took the cross, and the rosary,
And the golden harp on the lid that shone,
And he laid them carefully on a stone.

Then down in the depth of the grave sat he
And he raised the corpse upon his knee;
But in vain to gain the rings he strove,
For the hands were cold and they would not move:
He drew a knife from his baldrick gray,
To cut the rings and fingers away.

He gave one cut—he gave but one—
It scarcely reached unto the bone:
Just then the soul, so long exiled,
Returned again from its wanderings wild;
By the stars and the sun it ceased to roam,
And entered its own, its earthly home.
Loud shrieked the corse at the wound he gave,
And, rising, stood up in the grave.

The hoary thief was chilled at heart,
Scarce had he power left to depart;
For horror thrilled through every vein:
He did not cry, but he roared amain;
For hues of dread and death were rife
On the face of the form he had woke to life:
His reason fled from off her throne,
And never more dawned thereupon.

Aloud she called her Cela's name,
And the echoes called, but no Cela came.
Oh! much she marvelled that he had gone,
And left her thus in the grave alone.
She knew the place and the holy dome;
Few moments hence she had thither come:
And through the hues of the night she saw
The woods and towers of Carelha'.
'Twas mystery all—she did not ween
Of the state or the guise in which she had been;
She did not ween that while travelling afar
Away by the sun and the morning star,
By the moon, and the cloud, and aerial bow,
That her body was left on the earth below.

But now she stood in grievous plight;
The ground was chilled with the dews of the night;
Her frame was cold and ill at rest,
The dead rose waved upon her breast;
Her feet were coiled in the sheet so wan,
And fast from her hand the red blood ran.

'Twas late, late on a Sabbath night,
At the hour of the ghost and the restless sprite;
The mass at Carelha' had been read,
And all the mourners were bound to bed,
When a foot was heard on the paved floor,
And a gentle rap came to the door.

Oh! why should a rap of such gentle din,
Throw such amazement on all within?—
A dim haze clouded every sight;
Each hair had life, and stood upright;
No sound was heard throughout the hall,
But the beat of the heart and the cricket's call;
So deep the silence imposed by fear,
That a vacant buzz sung in the ear.

The lady of Carelha' first broke
The breathless hush, and thus she spoke:—
"Christ be our shield!—who walks so late,
And knocks so gently at my gate?
I felt a pang—it was not dread—
It was the memory of the dead.
Oh! death is a dull and dreamless sleep!
The mould is heavy, the grave is deep,
Else I had weened that foot so free
The step and the foot of my Mary Lee;
And I had weened that gentle knell
From the light hand of my daughter fell.
The grave is deep, it may not be!
Haste, porter—haste to the door and see."

He took the key with an eye of doubt,
He lifted the lamp and he looked about;
His lips a silent prayer addressed,
And the cross was signed upon his breast:
Thus mailed within the armour of God,
All ghostly to the door he strode.
He wrenched the bolt with grating din,
He lifted the latch—but none came in!
He thrust out his lamp, and he thrust out his head,
And he saw the face and the robes of the dead!
One sob he heaved, and tried to fly,
But he sunk on the earth, and the form came by.

She entered the hall, she stood in the door,
Till, one by one, dropt on the floor
The blooming maiden and matron old,
The friar gray and the yeoman bold.
It was like a scene on the Border green,
When the arrows fly and pierce unseen;
And nought was heard within the hall
But aves, vows, and groans withal.
The Lady of Carel' stood alone,
But moveless as a statue of stone.

"Oh! lady mother, thy tears forego;
Why all this terror and this woe?
But late when I was in this place,
Thou wouldst not look me in the face:
Oh! why do you blench at sight of me?
I am thy own child, thy Mary Lee."

"I saw thee dead and cold as clay:
I watched thy corpse for many a day;

I saw thee laid in the grave at rest;
I strewed the flowers upon thy breast;
And I saw the mould heap over thee—
Thou art not my child, my Mary Lee."[1]

O'er Mary's face amazement spread;
She knew not that she had been dead;
She gazed in mood irresolute:
Both stood aghast and both were mute.

"Speak, thou loved form—*my* glass is run,
I nothing dread beneath the sun:
Why comest thou in thy winding-sheet,
Thy life-blood streaming to thy feet?
The grave-rose that my own hands made
I see upon thy bosom spread;
The kerchief that my own hands bound
I see still tied thy temples round;
The golden ring and bracelet bands
Are still upon thy bloody hands.
From earthly hope all desperate driven,
I nothing fear beneath high heaven;
Give me thy hand and speak to me,
If thou art indeed my Mary Lee."

That mould is sensible and warm,
It leans upon a parent's arm:
The kiss is sweet, and the tears are sheen,
And kind are the words that pass between,
They cling as never more to sunder—
Oh! that embrace was fraught with wonder!

Yeoman, and maid, and menial poor
Upraised their heads from the marble floor;
With lengthened arm and forward stride
They tried if that form their touch would bide;
They felt her warm,—they heard,—they saw,
And marvel reigns in Carelha'!

The twain into their chamber repair;
The wounded hand is bound with care;
And there the mother heard with dread
The whole that I to you have said,
Of all the worlds where she had been,
And of all the glories she had seen.
I pledge no word that all is true,
The virgin's tale I have told to you:
But well 'tis vouched, by age and worth,
'Tis real that relates to earth.

'Twas trowed by every Border swain
The vision would full credence gain.
Certes 'twas once by all believed,
Till one great point was misconceived;
For the mass-men said, with fret and frown,
That through all space it well was known,
By moon or stars, the earth or sea,
An up and down there needs must be.
This error caught their minds in thrall;
'Twas dangerous and apocryphal,
And this nice fraud unhinged all.
So grievous is the dire mischance
Of priestcraft and of ignorance.

Belike thou now can'st well foresee,
What after happ'd to Mary Lee—
Then thou mayest close my legend here:
But ah! the tale to some is dear!
For though her name no more remains,
Her blood yet runs in minstrel veins.

In Mary's youth, no virgin's face
Wore such a sweet and moving grace;
Nor ever did maiden's form more fair
Lean forward to the mountain air;

[1] There is another Border tale resembling this, which would make an excellent subject for a poem of a different description. It likewise relates to the reanimation of a corpse; and happened no earlier than in the recollection of several persons yet living. Squire R——y of Burnlee fell deeply in love with the daughter of a worthy magistrate of an ancient Border town, so deeply indeed that he declared, and even swore, that he neither could nor would exist without her. This hasty and injudicious resolution was not, however, put fairly to the test; for, after a short but ardent courtship, she became his wife, and the man of course was happy beyond all possible description.

But, as the old song runs,

> "It happened ill, it happened worse,
> It happened that this lady did dee—"

they had not been many months married when the lady fell into fainting fits one morning, and expired suddenly; and after the usual hurry of galloping for doctors, rubbing of temples, and weeping of friends was all fairly over, the body was laid quietly into the bier, and borne away to the churchyard on the shoulders of four stout men in deep mourning, while the long funereal train came slowly up behind.

The distance from Burnlee to the churchyard is not half a mile, but the road winds up by a steep and narrow path, and about midway there is an old thorn three, which throws its long, crabbed, unyielding branches across the road. The bearers inadvertently pressing the bier against one of these branches, it came back with a sudden spring, and threw the coffin from the poles, which, after nearly felling the unfortunate laird, was dashed to pieces in the path. The people gathered all round in great perplexity, but in a few seconds they betook them to their heels and fled. The corpse, having been thrown out, rolled down the steep in its dead-clothes, till some of them, laying hold of it, began to lay it decently out on the brae; when, all at once, it sat up among their hands, and fell a struggling to get its arms loose. This struck them with such horror that they could not stand it, but fled precipitately, the laird running as fast as any of them, and without his hat too, which the coffin had knocked off in its fall. Some ran this way, and some that; and when they looked back and saw the dead woman gushing blood at the nose, and tearing the dressings from her face with both hands, they ran still the faster. A smith, of the surname of Walker, was the first to turn the chase, which he did by cursing his flying compeers most manfully. "It was a domned sheame," he said, "to see a hoonder men cheased by a dead woife, and hur never stworring off the beat nwother."

To make a long tale short, the lady walked home on her own legs, wrapped as she was in her winding sheet, and led by her affectionate and rejoiced husband on the one side, and by the parson on the other. She afterwards became a mother, and lived a number of years at Burnlee, though not perhaps so much beloved as she was during the first two or three months: at length she died again even more suddenly than she had done the first time. Every mean was used to bring about resuscitation in vain, and the lady was a second time laid in her bier, and borne away up the strait path to the churchyard. When the procession came to the old tree, the laird looked decently up, and said to the bearers, "I'll thank you to keep off that thorn."

But now, since from the grave returned,
So dazzling bright her beauty burned,
The eye of man could scarcely brook
With steady gaze thereon to look;
Such was the glow of her cheek and eyes,
She bloomed like the rose of paradise.

Though blither than she erst had been,
In serious mood she oft was seen.
When rose the sun o'er mountain gray,
Her vow was breathed to the east away:
And when low in the west he burned,
Still there her beauteous eye was turned.
For she saw that the flowrets of the glade
To him unconscious worship paid;
She saw them ope their breasts by day,
And follow his enlivening ray,
Then fold them up in grief by night,
Till the return of the blessed light.
When daylight in the west fell low,
She heard the woodland music flow,
Like farewell song, with sadness blent,
A soft and sorrowful lament:
But when the sun rose from the sea,
Oh! then the birds from every tree
Poured forth their hymn of holiest glee!
She knew that the wandering spirits of wrath
Fled from his eye to their homes beneath,
But when the God of glory shone
On earth from his resplendent throne,
In valley, mountain, or in grove,
Then all was life, and light, and love.
She saw the new-born infant's eye
Turned to that light incessantly;
Nor ever was that eye withdrawn
Till the mind thus carved began to dawn.
All nature worshipped at one shrine,
Nor knew that the impulse was divine.

The chiefs of the Forest the strife begin,
Intent this lovely dame to win;
But the living lustre of her eye
Baulked every knight's pretensions high:
Abashed they sank before her glance,
Nor farther could their claims advance:
Though love thrilled every heart with pain,
They did not ask, and they could not gain.

There came a harper out of the east;
A courteous and a welcome guest
In every lord and baron's tower—
He struck his harp of wondrous power:
So high his art, that all who heard
Seemed by some magic spell ensnared;
For every heart, as he desired,
Was thrilled with woe—with ardour fired,
Roused to high deeds his might above,
Or soothed to kindness and to love.
No one could learn from whence he came,
But Hugo of Norroway hight his name.

One day, when every baron came,
And every maid and noble dame,
To list his high and holy strain
Within the choir of Melrose fane,
The lady of Carelha' joined the band,
And Mary, the flower of all the land.

The strain rose soft—the strain fell low—
Oh! every heart was steeped in woe!
Again as it pealed a swell so high
The round drops stood in every eye,
And the aisles and the spires of the hallowed fane,
And the caves of Eildon sang it again.

Oh! Mary Lee is sick at heart;
That pang no tongue can ever impart;
It was not love, nor joy, nor woe,
Nor thought of heaven nor earth below;
'Twas all conjoined in gleam so bright—
A poignant feeling of delight:
The throes of a heart that sought its rest,
Its stay—its home in another's breast.
Ah! she had heard that holy strain
In a land she hoped to see again;
And seen that calm benignant eye
Above the spheres and above the sky;
And though the strain her soul had won,
She yearned for the time that it was done,
To greet the singer in language bland,
And call him Cela, and clasp his hand.

It was yon ancient tombs among
That Mary glided from the throng;
Smiled in the fair young stranger's face,
And proffered her hand with courteous grace.
He started aloof—he bent his eye—
He stood in a trance of ecstasy!
He blessed the power that had impelled
Him onward till he that face beheld;
For he knew his bourn was gained at last,
And all his wanderings then were past.

She called him Cela, and made demand
Anent his kindred and his land;
But his hand upon his lip he laid,
He lifted his eye, and he shook his head!
"No—Hugo of Norroway is my name,
Ask not from whence or how I came:
But since ever memory's ray was born
Within this breast of joy forlorn,
I have sought for thee, and only thee:
For I ween thy name is Mary Lee.
My heart and soul with thine are blent,
My very being's element—
Oh! I have wonders to tell to thee,
If thou art the virgin Mary Lee!"

The Border chiefs were all amazed,
They stood at distance round and gazed;
They knew her face he never had seen,
But they heard not the words that passed between.
They thought of the power that had death beguiled,
They thought of the grave and the vision wild;

And they found that human inference failed,
That all in mystery was veiled,
And they shunned the twain in holy awe;—
The flower of the forest and Carelha'
Are both by the tuneful stranger won,
And a new existence is begun.

Sheltered amid his mountains afar,
He kept from the bustle of Border war;
For he loved not the field of foray and scathe,
Nor the bow, nor the shield, nor the sword of death;
But he tuned his harp in the wild unseen,
And he reared his flocks on the mountain green.

He was the foremost the land to free
Of the hart, and the hind, and the forest tree:
The first who attuned the pastoral reed
On the mountains of Ettrick, and braes of Tweed:
The first who did to the land impart
The shepherd's rich and peaceful art,
To bathe the fleece, to cherish the dam,
To milk the ewe and to wean the lamb;
And all the joys ever since so rife
In the shepherd's simple, romantic life.
More bliss, more joy, from him had birth
Than all the conquerors of the earth.

They lived in their halls of Carelha'
Until their children's sons they saw;
There Mary closed a life refined
To purity of soul and mind,
And at length was laid in old Lindeen,
In the very grave where she erst had been.
Five gallant sons upbore her bier,
And honoured her memory with a tear;
And her stone, though now full old and gray,
Is known by the hinds unto this day.

From that time forth, on Ettrick's shore,
Old Hugo the harper was seen no more!
Some said he died as the morning rose;
But his body was lost ere the evening close.
He was not laid in old Lindeen;
For his grave or his burial never was seen.

Some said that eve a form they saw
Arise from the tower of Carelha'
Aslant the air, and hover a while
Above the spires of the hallowed pile,
Then sail away in a snow-white shroud,
And vanish afar in the eastern cloud.

But others deemed that his grave was made
By hands unseen in the greenwood glade.
Certes that in one night there grew
A little mound of an ashen hue,
And some remains of gravel lay
Mixed with the sward at the break of day;
But the hind past by with troubled air,
For he knew not what might be slumbering there;
And still above that mound there grows
Yearly a wondrous fairy rose.

Beware that cairn and dark green ring!
For the elves of eve have been heard to sing
Around that grave with eldritch croon,
Till trembled the light of the waning moon;
And from that cairn, at midnight deep,
The shepherd has heard from the mountain steep
Arise such a mellowed holy strain,
As if the minstrel had woke again.

Late there was seen, on summer tide,
A lovely form that wont to glide
Round green Bowhill, at the fall of even,
So like an angel sent from heaven,[1]
That all the land believed and said
Their Mary Lee was come from the dead;
For since that time no form so fair
Had ever moved in this earthly air:
And whenever that beauteous shade was seen
To visit the walks of the Forest green,
The joy of the land ran to excess,
For they knew that it boded them happiness.
Peace, love, and truth, for ever smiled
Around that genius of the wild.

Ah me! there is omen of deep dismay,
For that saintlike form has vanished away!
I have watched her walks by the greenwood glade,
And the mound where the harper of old was laid;
I have watched the bower where the woodbine blows,
And the fairy ring, and the wondrous rose,
And all her haunts by Yarrow's shore,
But the heavenly form I can see no more!
She comes not now our land to bless,
Or to cherish the poor and the fatherless,
Who lift to heaven the tearful eye
Bewailing their loss—and well may I!
I little weened when I struck the string,
In fancy's wildest mood to sing,
That sad and low the strain should close,
'Mid real instead of fancied woes!

[1] These lines, and all to the end, relate to the late Right Honourable Harriet, Duchess of Buccleuch and Queensberry, whose lamented death happened at the very time the first edition of this work was issuing from the press, and cast a gloom over a great proportion of the south of Scotland. Thousands then felt that their guardian angel was indeed departed. Among her latest requests to her noble husband, was one in favour of the humble author of these fairy lays; but that circumstance was not known to me till several years afterwards. It was not however forgotten by him to whom it was made, whose letter to me on that subject I keep as the most affecting thing I ever saw.

THE POETIC MIRROR.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE reader can scarcely fail to be amused with Hogg's advertisement to the "Poetic Mirror," and the laughable gravity and circumspection with which he attempts, but without positively committing himself, to convey the impression that the several poems of the collection were the veritable productions of those authors whose manner and style they imitated. The origin of these imitations, and the causes of such a harmless literary deception, have been already noticed in the biographical sketch of the Ettrick Shepherd prefixed to this edition of his Works.

That Hogg expected to obtain those voluntary contributions which the best poets of the day had promised, and that he hoped they would compose such a brilliant wreath as would give pleasure to the public and bring profit to himself, are facts generally known. And scarcely less generally known and understood is the facility with which such promises are made, compared with the certainty and punctuality of their fulfilment. Authors in general, and especially poets, in the benevolence of the moment, and to advance the interests of a friend, will readily engage to furnish such gratuitous contributions; but continued experience has shown how dextrously the accomplishment can be delayed, or even positively eluded. It was thus that after a world of kind promises, the Shepherd found himself circumstanced. He well knew, however, that let them resile as they might, he was still pledged to the public, and responsible for the performance of his engagement. In this dilemma, and after waiting long for what was never to be forthcoming, he resolved to create what he could not find, and play not merely the part of three worthies himself, but of all the nine together—a stretch of daring which that "thrice-worthy gentleman," Master Holofernes, would never have contemplated. Such an enterprise also was not wholly unprecedented. The authors of the "Rejected Addresses" had achieved it, and even won by their imitations such a high and wide popularity as they could not have secured by their own original productions. Thus justifying the attempt to his conscience, and confident in the versatility of his powers, Hogg produced the following wonderful imitations of Byron, Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Wilson—and himself.

It is evident that a work like the present is not to be tried with the usual gravity and by the established laws of the poetical tribunal. The imitations are not expected to be serious portraits, but amusing caricatures. They must indeed be so like the originals as to be easily recognized, but at the same time, so exaggerated and grotesque as to provoke a hearty laugh. And who will refuse to acknowledge that Hogg has succeeded to a miracle? At each uplifting of his "Mirror," the reflected image of some great poet of the day was presented, not only so drolly but so faithfully, that the world was convulsed with merriment, as well as arrested with surprise; and each feat of this legerdemain was performed with such unmistakeable kindness and respect, that the originals themselves were the merriest of the spectators.

But the merely comic qualities of this singular collection of travesties are not its chief attraction, and Hogg was too high a poet to be contented with such inferior success. He could not write dully even if he had wished it; and while he imitated each poet, he seems to have been visited with a large portion of that poet's genuine inspiration. In each of these imitations, therefore, we can recognize native talent scarcely inferior to that which it proceeds to caricature or imitate. In the "Guerilla" are some sounding stanzas and deep bitter feelings of misanthropical scorn, in which the author of "Childe Harold" might have recognized the echoes of his own voice. "Wat of the Cleuch" was mistaken for a poem from the pen of Scott himself, and judged to be by no means the worst of his productions. Wilson had cause to be proud of being copied, imitated, or taken off by a better poet than himself; and even Southey might have advisedly written the "Curse of the Laureate" rather than the "Vision of Judgment," which recoiled with such a heavy judgment upon his own head. Of all the authors whom Hogg thus imitated, the only one to whom he assigned a hard measure was Wordsworth, and the cause, perhaps, that may be assigned for this, was the scornful rebuff which the shepherd of Ettrick had received from the sage of Rydal, at the meeting of the poets under the light of the aurora—a scorn which of all men poets are the least able to endure or willing to forget.

Having gone thus far in his work of travesty the mirthful bard knew when to stop; and therein he showed that wise discretion which is not always combined with wit. A joke protracted or thrice repeated, instead of raising a laugh, can only provoke a yawn. The imitations of the "Poetic Mirror" are therefore few and brief, and the list closes when the merriment is at its height. After the auditory had enjoyed their hour's amusement, the curtain fell before the reaction of weariness could succeed.

THE POETIC MIRROR.

THE AUTHOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editor claims no merit in the following work, save that of having procured from the Authors the various poems of which the volume is composed; for, as to the arrangement, it is casual, and simply as the pieces came to hand.

A number of years have now elapsed since he first conceived the idea of procuring something original from each of the principal living Bards of Britain, and publishing those together, judging that such a work, however small, could not fail of forming a curiosity in literature. On applying to them all personally, or by letter, he found that the greater part of them entered into his views with more cordiality than he had reason to expect; and, after many delays and disappointments, he is at last enabled to give this volume to the public. He regrets that there are many of the living Poets, whom he highly esteems, that have not yet complied with his request; but as he is almost certain of something from each of them being forthcoming, he hopes, at no distant period, to be able to lay before the world another volume, at least more diversified than the present.

With respect to those who have already so kindly supported him in the present undertaking, it behoves him to say nothing. The pages which follow will show how well they have kept their word; and he takes this public opportunity of thanking them most cordially for their liberal assistance, to which he is conscious that his merits have in no degree entitled him.

The Guerilla.

SORE for the selfishness of men I wail—
Scarce other motives human action guide;
And sore I pity those of intellect frail,
Who in aught else save their own strength confide.
That might, that soul, with heaven alone allied,
May all the casual gusts of fate defy;
But he who trusts in power or kingly pride
Well it behoves, like Britons, to rely
On miscreants' doubtful aid, for thankless knaves to die!

It hath been said, and suiteth well my tale,
That Spain's hot peasants danger strove to shun,
Even when their foemen sorest did prevail,
And ravaged every vale of Arragon.
If there is wealth to gain, or insult done,
The proud and selfish Spaniard aught will dare;
Further he cares not—feels not—but anon
Flies to his gleesome dance and jocund fare,
And gives unto the winds his vows and patriot care.

Erewhile, in hamlet of full old regard,
A goodly hind, Alayni hight, did won,
His parents' healthful toil who daily shared,
And on each festal eve, when was begun
The blithsome dance and frolic, there was none
Who ruled the sport with such resistless sway;
And when, perchance, his will was lothly done,
His froward mood displeasure did bewray;
Ne failed he then to thwart and contravene the play.

Oh, me! he was a hot and restless wight:
No rival nor superior might he brook,
In feat of deft activity or might,
Nor even in mirth or maiden's favouring look.
At fall of evening ofttimes he forsook
His father's home, some secret deeds to dare:
Never was known the pathway that he took,
Although his walks were watched with prying care;
But many doubtful stains his raiment daily bare.

One maid he loved—young Kela of the dale,
With passion vehement, and her alone:
The foemen came—no tears could aught avail,
For they were men of France, and never known
To feel for pain or misery but their own.
The village homes were plundered and despoiled;
The beauteous village maids of Arragon
They dragged from parents' home in anguish wild
To their voluptuous tents, to live in bondage vilde.

Kela, the loveliest of these mountain maids,
Marot, the leader, for his own did claim;
All proffers of redemption he evades,
Answering to all her plaints with words of shame.
Loudly she wailed, and called Alayni's name,
While he, aroused to madness and despair,
Raved in such words as tongue did never frame,
Smote his perturbed breast and tore his hair,
And to have red revenge by Jesus' cross he sware.

Fast did the frenzy seize the village crew;
Around Alayni thronged they each one;
Their maids, their wealth, had vanished from their view.
Frantic they flew unto the altar-stone,
And, kneeling round, with hands laid thereupon,
They vowed to God nor sleep nor rest to take,
Until the spoilers should by blood atone

For the unholy pillage they did make;
So help them Christ in heaven, for youth and virtue's sake!

Man, maid, and matron, swore eternal feud
Against the ruthless reavers and their race;
To madness changed their sullen lassitude,
Forth did they spread abroad from place to place,
Wrath in each voice and wildness on each face:
Aloud they cried for vengeance manifold;
Much magnified their scathe and sore disgrace.
Each Arragonian, when the tale was told,
Caught the wild flame in guise which pen may not unfold.

From orchard and from field the peasants run.
Even the gray sires refuse to stay behind;
Ten thousand bosoms pant beneath the sun,
Ten thousand vows are borne upon the wind.
All towards blood and massacre inclined,
The throng marched forth—Alayni led them on.
'Twas night—their foes were all to sloth resigned;
For they had wassailed deep, feasting upon
The spoils and maiden charms of plundered Arragon.

They knew nor arms nor armed troop was nigh;
The hostile peasantry they laughed to scorn;
Still were they lying there, and long shall lie!
What bands of spoilers waked not on the morn!
In one short hour an army was o'erborne,
Slaughtered like sheep, or in the flight cut down;
Small was the number left to stray forlorn,
Nor could they tell by whom they were o'erthrown—
An army late there was, but army now was none.

Alayni with three comrades madly sped
Unto the tent where hated Marot lay;
They found him lying on voluptuous bed,
And in his arms his lovely helpless prey:
Like one she seemed who longed much for day;
Her moistened cheek no downy pillow prest,
Her raven locks dishevelled and astray
Hung o'er her panting bosom, ill at rest,
Which turned was away from her destroyer's breast.

"Up, noble captain!—up and taste our cheer;
A Spanish festival awaits thee nigh;
To lie voluptuously in slumber here
Great shame it is, while souls so quickly fly
From this to regions of a genial sky.
Up, noble captain—thou must come away!"
Alayni said, and raised him violently;
"Treason!" the captain cried, in wild dismay;
Albeit they loudly laughed at his forlorn array.

Alayni dragged him forth unto the green,
With burning hand entwisted in his hair;
Sore did he writhe, and loudly called, I ween,
For kindred arms, but kindred none were there:
While him they mocked with light and jocund air,
And much did aggravate his woeful plight.
Oh, it forsooth is grievous to declare
How they did mangle that poor hapless wight,
Nor ceased their ruthless game till he was slain outright!

"Rush forth," Alayni said, "into the field,
The work of death goes unresisted on!
Rush forth, my friends, our haughty foemen yield;
For me, the while, I shortly must begone
To comfort my true love, but all alone,
As meet it is, with her I would remain.
Strong be your arms, your hearts to-night be stone,
To-morrow soft as they were wont again;
God speed your patriot swords! Haste forth into the plain."

With torch in hand, and all with blood besprent,
And looks that might the stoutest heart dismay,
Forthwith he entered the dismal tent,
Where, all forlorn, the lovely Kela lay:
He placed his torch ere word he deigned to say,
Then gazed on her sweet face with sorrow steeped;
At first she clasped him in fondest way,
But minding what she was, her blood yerept,
She hid her youthful face with both her hands, and wept.

"Well may'st thou wail," he said, in deepest tone,
"That face I loved above all earthly thing!
But never more shall smile beam thereupon
For thou art lost beyond recovering.
To life of scorn can thy young spirit cling,
To kindred and to friends a loathful stain,
A beacon set each lover's heart to wring!
It may not be—a momentary pain—
One penance undergone, and thou art pure again!"

She looked into his face, and there beheld
The still unmoving darkness of his eye;
She thought of that could never be cancelled,
And lay in calm and sweet benignity;
Down by her side her arms outstretched lie,
Her beauteous breast was fairer than the snow,
And then with stifled sob and broken sigh
Its fascinating mould was heaving so—
Never was movement seen so sweetly come and go.

He drew his bloody poniard from his waist,
And pressed against her breast its point of steel;
No single boon she to his ear addressed,
Calm did she lie as one who did not feel!
No shiver once did agony reveal;
Scarce did she move a finger by her side,
Though her heart's blood around her did congeal;
With mild but steady look his face she eyed,
And once upon her tongue his name in whisper died.

With gloomy mien, and unrelenting heart,
O'er her he hung and watched her life's decay;
He marked the pulse's last convulsive start,
And the sweet breath in fetches waste away.
Just ere the last these words she did assay:
"Now all is past—unblameable I die."
Then her pale lips did close no more for aye,

A dim blue haze set slowly o'er her eye,
And low on purpled couch that mountain flower did lie.

"Ay, it is so!" exclaimed he—"and 'tis well;
Even yet I would not wish thy life reprieved—
Of thy firm soul shall future ages tell,
Nor could thy spotless fame have been retrieved—
Oh, ne'er to be washed out the stain received!
Fair sacrifice, thou hast not died in vain."
He prest the breast which now no longer heaved,
And his warm lips to hers did closely strain;
But ah! that passive lip—it did not kiss again.

"By this dear blood," he cried, "again I swear
Revenge unslaked for ever to pursue;
Heaven was my witness how I held thee dear,
And shall be witness what I'll dare for you!"
In the warm tide his arms he did imbue,
And form'd a cross of blood upon his breast;
Then, maniac-like, forth to the fight he flew
In Marot's gear and spangled helmet drest,
And Kela's raven hair waved on it for a crest.

Blood was his joy, and havoc was his meed,
His direful rage no living foe might shun;
If there was bloody work or ruthless deed,
Forthwith by him that bloody work was done.
Great was the spoil and booty that was won,
But greater waited them of gold and store:
A convoy came, such there was never known;
Forth did they rush ten thousand men and more,
And found the encumbered foe on Ebro's winding shore.

Alayni led the van—on him they looked
As something more than man in prowess bold;
One to be feared he seemed, but hardly brooked;
A demon spirit not to be controlled.
Mounted on steed with bit and spurs of gold,
No leader ever wore more martial air;
No banner o'er his host was seen unrolled,
Save the red cross of blood his bosom bare,
And waving in the wind the virgin's raven hair.

Oh, wild was the confusion and the throng,
For the guerillas wore the foe's array;
They mixed with them and pressed their ranks among:
Judge of their wonderment and sore dismay,
When through their bodies passed in mortal sway
The scymitar or spear with ruthless blow!
Each deemed himself of treason's hand the prey,
And wildly looked upon his murderous foe;—
He knew the garb full well, the face he did not know.

He who hath seen a ship triumphant sail
Full gaily on before the breeze's wing,
High wooing in the clouds the fitful gale;
Till, proudly bold and undistinguishing,
Instant she rolleth with resistless swing
Where two opposing tides together flow,
While mariners to mast and rigging cling,
And wot not how to steer or where to go—
He may conceive the scene, and he alone can know.

Oh, how Alayni joyed in the deray
And wild astonishment that seized the foe!
Like greedy wolf that gorges up his prey,
Or hungry lion, did he onward go;
And over wounded warriors lying low,
Spurning and writhing in most piteous case,
Full joyful did he prance; and loved it so,
He reined his horse to rear upon the place,
Causing his mailed hooves deform the human face.

They called for mercy, and their arms threw down;
But fierce Alayni when their plight he saw,
He spurred, and, laughing loud, rushed them upon,
Gashing their bodies so, withouten awe
Of warrior usance or of nature's law—
They deemed him demon in the shape of man;
Ne could they from the massacre withdraw
Who followed him, for still their eyes fore-ran
Young Kela's coal-black hair ystreaming in the van.

Fair were the dames who came with that array,
With their proud lords the wealth of Spain to share,
By the guerillas rudely borne away:
Oh, how they 'gan with plaints to load the air!
Though youth and maiden innocence were there,
Alayni purposed that very night
On one huge pile to stretch their bodies fair;
To watch the flame ascending fierce and bright,
And with their dying throes feast his distempered sight.

But Juan, a right brave and courteous youth,
Dared to oppose the baleful sacrifice:
Soon was he joined by young and old; forsooth
He feared no frown from dark Alayni's eyes,
Who all alone had stood in this emprize,
And forced was, though sore enraged, to yield.
For beauteous captive then each warrior vies—
Oh woful doom! upon the sanguine field,
Far better had their blood their first betrothment sealed.

Deep in an orange grove the feast was spread,
No lovelier scene in nature could be seen;
The loaded boughs were bending over-head,
Drooping with golden fruit and foliage green:
Fast flowed the wine, till every youthful mien
Was lighted up to jocund mirth the while;
So gay their humour and retorts so keen,
To captive's cheek they almost did beguile
The languid lines of joy in momentary smile.

But dark Alayni at their head still held
His stern demeanour and his downcast eye:
And when to listening or to speech compelled,
Red was his look and sullen the reply,
As if his mind on incidents gone by
Hung with a dry and hollow thirstiness;
Or toiled in trouble through futurity,

Unable for one moment to repress
The agony within of spirit comfortless.

The common woes that human kind belay
May by the pen or language be defined;
The sigh may tell of them, the tear betray:
Like these away they pass upon the wind.
But that insatiate yearning of the mind
Still preying, hungering, craving, still to prey,
Doomed never bourn or resting-place to find;
Oh, that must torture, undivulged for aye,
Save in the soul's still voice, the eye's perturbed ray!

That voice inaudible each spirit there
Seemed to have heard or felt upon it creep;
When shot along Alayni's troubled glare,
That instant all were hushed in silence deep,
As lightning's gleam that quivers down the steep,
Scaring the cheek of mirth and jollity:
Down sunk the eye—the captive maidens weep;
The motley group right wearied are to see,
By wassailing o'ercome and rampant revelry.

Alayni rose, and waved his hand on high—
All silent sat before that face so grim;
"A health!" he cried, and followed with his eye
Till every cup was filled unto the brim;
He beckoned short—each look was turned on him;
"Here's to the dead and those that soon must die!"
'Gan every eye and every brain to swim,
As up they raised the cup, without reply,
"Here's to the dead," they said, "and those that
soon must die!"

Alayni vanishes in darksome shade;
Home to his cabin each guerilla reels,
Loaded with spoil, and leading captive maid,
Or high-born dame, that sore degradance feels;
In vain she supplicates, in vain she kneels,
The high-flushed conquerors will take no nay.
Deep is the sleep each weary eye that seals;
But there is one abroad till break of day,
From whom the shuddering watch-dog growling
turns away.

Oh, follow not that dark perturbed form
Down by the winding wave or shadowy tree,
Whose mind would better suit the raving storm,
Than such a scene of mild tranquillity!
He sees a form no other eye can see,
He hears a voice no other ear can hear;
A comely breast heaving with agony
Is still before his eye, and in his ear
Whispers a voice of woe to his moved spirit dear.

Can that sweet voice induce to vengeful deed?
Can that unearthly stillness of the eye
Arouse to murder or to suicide?
Oh, it is ever present, ever nigh!
With blasphemy and cursing his reply
Is fully fraught—his eye-balls wildly stare;
With horrid laughter hell he does defy;
Then turns his brow to heaven with fiend-like air,
And flouts the eternal God in mockery of prayer!

Is the brain fevered, or has baleful fiend
Expelled humanity and entered in,
That thus his mouth and nostrils wide distend?
Gasping he seems for breath, but cannot win
So much of the night-air that, cool and thin,
Wanders o'er earth, yet will not quench the heat
That burns his fervid panting chest within:
Oh, Heaven! can life-blood only that abate?
Didst thou the human frame for slaughter thus create?

Millions have bled that sycophants may rule,
Have fallen to dust and left no trace behind;
And yet we say that Heaven is merciful,
And loves and cares for all the human kind;
And we will spread our hands, and mouthe the wind,
With fulsome thanks for all its tenderness.
Ah me! that man, preposterously blind,
Should feel, hear, see, reflect, yet not the less
Hope in his hopeless state of abject nothingness.

Poor worm! to death, doubt, and despondence born,
How blest art thou entrusting Providence!
Oh, thou hast nought to dread, though all forlorn;
Thou hast a guardian, a sure defence.
There rest, environed in Omnipotence,
In safety rest—Alas! and woe is me,
That tyrant should, on any vague pretence,
Drunkard, or madman, do away with thee,
Thou thing of high regard—of immortality!

That live-long night by village mansion sped
A darkling ruffian all in blood besmeared,
With breath repressed, with swift and silent tread,
To every dwelling, every couch he neared—
No guardian angel of the fair appeared.
Heaven wept in copious dews—uprose the day:
What horrors brain of wakening lover seared,
When in his arms he found the gelid clay,
Or rolled from his embrace the severed head away!

Oh, many a faultless dame was slain that night,
That none might 'scape in lawless couch that lay;
Like the sweet children of the Bethlemite,
Who died that one might not escape away.
Great pity both!—but, fully to repay
To men the waste of children's guiltless blood,
Myriads of benefits in fair array
From thence have sprung, the yearning spirit's food—
Such base beginning sure could not but end in good

From this night-slaughter benefits were few,
Save to the maidens who full long had pined;
Of this be well assured, that all is true
By bloated priestcraft evermore defined
Of wisdom in all things by Heaven designed.
But to my tale—Oh, many a weeping eye,
And much astonishment and anger reigned
O'er all Cinca's vale, where hamlets lie
Thick as the diamond sparks in autumn's midnight
sky.

Dark moved the vale with many a funeral train,
O'er many a sepulchre the tear was shed;
For who can bear to look on woman slain—
The breast of comeliness and beauteous head,
That nought but love and kindness cherished,
Dishonoured and consigned to cheerless gloom?—
Can see the flower of nature lowly laid,
From hand that should have guarded meet her doom.
In land of life and beauty never more to bloom!

Yet, saving Juan, who in manly wise
Withstood the shameful deed, no man was slain;
His bosom ope was ripped in woeful guise,
And from its habitance his heart was ta'en.
Well did they know the source of all their pain,
Well knew the savage hand that this had done.
They sought Alayni, but they sought in vain:
His game of death was o'er, and he was gone
Far from his native vale 'mid bloodier scenes to won.

I've heard of one, of whom have many heard,
That on Segovia's mountains roamed a while;
A savage hero of most strange regard,
On whose dark visage never beamed a smile,
Whose beard was never trimmed, whose ruthless toil
Of slaughter only with existence ceased;
Who died in maniac guise 'mid bloody broil,
Laughing aloud, yet pressing to his breast
A tiar of raven hair which every morn he kissed.

It was Alayni—dost thou wail his case,
Beloved unhappy, restless unbeloved?
Oh, there are minds that not for happiness
Were fram'd here nor hereafter; who ne'er proved
A joy, save in some object far removed;
Who leave with loathing what they longed to win,
That evermore to that desired have roved,
While the insatiate gnawing is within,
And happiness for aye beginning to begin.

Epistle to Mr. R. S——.

MELROSE, TEVIOTDALE, *August* 3.

Dear S——, while the southern breeze
Floats freshening, from the upland leas,
Whispering of Autumn's mellow spoils,
And jovial sports and grateful toils,
Awakening in the softened breast
Regrets and wishes long suppress;
Oh, come with me once more to hail
The scented heath, the sheafy vale.
The hills and streams of Teviotdale.
'Tis but a parting pilgrimage,
To save from Time's destroying rage,
And changeful Fortune's withering blast,
The hallowed pictures of the past.
And though my steps have lingered long
From scenes that prompt the poet's song,
Till almost in my heart has died
The flame that glowed with boyish pride,
For *this* I'll wake once more the strain,
Which else had ne'er been waked again.
And there we'll woo the visions wild
Which first on opening fancy smiled,
By breezy dawn, by quiet noon,
Beneath the bright broad harvest-moon,
Or 'midst the mystic shadows dim
Which round the car of Twilight swim;
While dreams of glory spring to birth,
More lovely than the forms of earth.

Then come, dear comrade! welcome still
In every change of good or ill,
Whom young affection's wishes claim,
And friendship ever finds the same—
Awake with all thy flow of mind,
With fancy bright and feelings kind,
And tune with me the rambling lay
To cheer us on our mountain way.

Say, shall we wander where the swain,
Bent o'er his staff, surveys the plain,
With lyart cheeks and locks of gray,
Like patriarch of the olden day?
Around him ply the reaper band,
With lightsome heart and eager hand,
And mirth and music cheer the toil—
While sheaves that stud the russet soil,
And sickles gleaming in the sun,
Tell jocund AUTUMN is begun.

How gay the scenes of harvest morn,
Where Ceres pours her plenteous horn;
The hind's hoarse cry from loading car,
The voice of laughter from afar;
The placid master's sober joy,
The frolic of the thoughtless boy!—
Cold is the heart when charms like these
Have lost their genial power to please.
But yet, my friend, there is an hour
(Oft has thy bosom owned its power)
When the full heart, in pensive tone,
Sighs for a scene more wild and lone.
Oh then, more sweet on Scotland's shore,
The beetling cliff, the breakers' roar;
Or moorland waste, where all is still,
Save wheeling plover's whistle shrill;—
More sweet the seat by ancient stone,
Or tree with lichens overgrown,
Than richest bower that autumn yields,
'Midst merry England's cultured fields.
Then, let our pilgrim footsteps seek
Old Cheviot's pathless mossy peak;
For there the Mountain Spirit still
Lingers around the lonely hill,
To guard his wizard grottoes hoar,
Where Cimbrian sages dwelt of yore;
Or, shrouded in his robes of mist,
Ascends the mountain's shaggy breast,

To seize his fearful seat upon
The elf-enchanted Hanging Stone,
And count the kindred streams that stray
Through the broad regions of his sway:—
Fair sister streams, that wend afar
By bloomy bank or barren scaur,
Now hidden by the clustering brake,
Now lost amid the mountain lake,
Now clasping, with protecting sweep,
Some mouldering castle's moated steep,
Till, issuing from the uplands brown,
Fair rolls each flood by tower and town.
The hills recede, and on the sight
Swell the bold rivers broad and bright:
The eye—the fancy almost fails
To trace them through their thousand vales,
Winding these Border hills among
(The boast of chivalry and song),
From B———t's banks of softest green
To the rude verge of dark Lochskene.—
'Tis a heart-stirring sight to view,
Far to the westward stretching blue,
That frontier ridge, which erst defied
The invader's march, the oppressor's pride;—
The bloody field, for many an age,
Of rival nations' wasteful rage;
In later times a refuge given
To exiles in the cause of Heaven.

Far inland, where the mountain crest
O'erlooks the waters of the west;
And, 'midst the moorland wilderness,
Dark moss-cleuchs form a drear recess,
Curtained with ceaseless mists which feed
The sources of the Clyde and Tweed—
There, injured Scotland's patriot band
For faith and freedom made their stand,
When traitor kings, who basely sold
Their country's fame for Gallic gold—
Too abject o'er the free to reign,
Warned by a father's fate in vain—
In bigot fury trampled down
The race who oft preserved their crown:
There, worthy of his masters, came
The despots' champion, *bloody Graham*,
To stain for aye a warrior's sword,
And lead a fierce, though fawning horde,
The *human* bloodhounds of the earth,
To hunt the peasant from his hearth.
—Tyrants! could not misfortune teach
That man has rights beyond your reach!
Thought ye the torture and the stake
Could that intrepid spirit break,
Which even in woman's breast withstood
The terrors of the fire and flood?
Yes—though the sceptic's tongue deride
Those martyrs who for conscience died;
Though modish history blight their fame,
And sneering courtiers hoot the name
Of men who dared alone be free
Amidst a nation's slavery,
Yet long for them the poet's lyre
Shall wake its notes of heavenly fire;
Their names shall nerve the patriot's hand,
Upraised to save a sinking land;
And piety shall learn to burn
With holier transports o'er their urn.
But now, all sterner thoughts forgot,
Peace broods upon the peasant's cot;
And if tradition still prolongs
The memory of his father's wrongs,
'Tis but the grateful thought that borrows
A blessing from departed sorrows.
How lovely seems the simple vale
Where lives our sires' heroic tale!
The mossy pass, the mountain flood,
Still hallowed by the patriot's blood;
The rocky cavern, once his tent,
And now his deathless monument,
Rehearsing to the kindling thought
What Faith inspired and Valour wrought!
Oh, ne'er shall he whose ardent prime
Was fostered in the freeman's clime,
Though doomed to seek a distant strand,
Forget his glorious native land;
Forget—'mid Brahma's blood-stained groves—
These sacred scenes of youthful loves;
Sequestered haunts—so still, so fair,
That holy Faith might worship there,
And Error weep away her stains,
And dark Remorse forget his pains;
And homeless hearts by fortune tost,
Or early hopeless passion crost,
Regain the peace they long had lost!

Then let us roam that lovely land,
By classic Teviot's sylvan strand,
By Yair and Plora's pathless glens,
And haunted Yarrow's dreary dens;
Till, with far-circling steps we hail
Thy native B——t's broomy vale,
And reach my boyhood's birchen bowers
'Mong C——'s cottages and towers.

C——! like voice of years gone by,
I hear thy mountain-melody!—
It comes with long-forgotten dreams,
Once cherished by thy winding streams,
And sings of schoolboy rambles free,
And heartfelt young hilarity.
I see the moss-grown turrets hoar
Dim-gleaming on thy woodland shore,
Where oft, apart from vulgar eye,
I loved at summer-tide to lie,
Abandoned to the witching sway
Of some old bard's heroic lay;
Or poring o'er the immortal story
Of Roman and of Grecian glory.
Yet aye one minstrel charmed me more
Than all I learned of classic lore,
Or war and beauty, gaily blent
In pride of knightly tournament;

Even HE, in rustic verse who told
Of Scotland's champion—Wallace bold—
Of Scotland's ancient "luve and lee,"
And Southron's coward treachery.
And oft I conned that harper's page
With old hereditary rage,
Till I have wept, in bitter mood,
That now no more in English blood
My country's falchion might atone
The warrior's fall and widow's moan.
Or, 'neath the oak's broad-bending shade,
With half-shut eyelids musing laid,
Weaving in fancy's tissue strange
The shapeless visions of revenge,
I conjured back the past again—
The marshalled bands, the battle-plain,
The Border slogan's pealing shout,
The shock, the tumult, and the rout,
Victorious Scotland's bugle-blast,
And charging knights that hurry past;
Till down the dim-withdrawing vale
I seemed to see their glancing mail,
And hear the fleet barb's furious tramp
Re-echoed from yon ancient camp.

But, chief, when summer twilight mild
Drew her dim curtain o'er the wild,
I loved beside that ruin gray
To watch the fading gleam of day.
And though, perchance, with secret dread
I heard the bat flit round my head,
While winds that waved the long lank grass,
With sound unearthly seemed to pass,
Yet, with a pleasing horror fell
Upon my heart the thrilling spell:
For all that met the eye or ear
Was still so pure and peaceful here,
I deemed no evil might intrude
Within its sacred solitude.—
Still, vivid memory can recall
The figure of each shattered wall:
The aged trees, all hoar with moss,
Low bending o'er the sullen fosse;
The rushing of the mountain flood;
The cushat's cooing in the wood;
The rooks that o'er the turrets sail;
The lonely curlew's distant wail;
The flocks that high on H———m rest,
The glories of the glowing west.

And, tinged with that departing sun,
To fancy's eye, arises dun
A hill, along whose dusky brow,
Yet unprofaned by rustic plough,
The shaggy gorse and brown heath wave
O'er many a nameless warrior's grave.
—Yon peak, of yore, which wide and far
Gleamed like the wakeful eye of war,
And oft with warning flame and smoke,
Ten thousand spears to battle woke;
Now down each subject glen descries
Blue wreaths from quiet hamlets rise,
To where, soft fading on the eye,
Tweed's cultured banks in beauty lie.
Wide waving with a flood of grain
From Eildon to the eastern main.
—Oft from yon height I loved to mark,
Soon as the morning roused the lark,
And woodlands raised their raptured hymn,
That land of glory spreading dim;
While slowly up the awakening dale
The mists withdrew their fleecy veil,
And tower, and wood, and winding stream,
Were brightening in the golden beam.
Yet where the westward shadows fell,
My eye with fonder gaze would dwell,
Though wild the view, and brown and bare;
Nor castled halls, nor hamlets fair,
Nor range of sheltering woods, were there,
Nor river's sweeping pride between,
To give *expression* to the scene.
There stood a simple home, where swells
The meady sward to moory fells,—
A rural dwelling thatched and warm,
Such as might suit the upland farm.
A honeysuckle clasped the sash,
Half-shaded by the giant ash;
And there the wall-spread apple-tree
Gave its white blossoms to the bee,
Beside the hop-bower's twisted shade,
Where age reclined and childhood played.
Below, the silvery willows shook
Their tresses o'er a rambling brook,
That gamboll'd 'mong its banks of broom,
Till lost in L———'s haunted gloom,
Methinks I hear its gurgling dash,
Beside yon sheltering clump of ash,
Which screens below the boiling pool
With pebbled bottom clear and cool,
Where often, from the shelving brim,
We launched on sedgy sheaf to swim.

From Teviot's lovelier dales remote,
The traveller's glance would scarcely note
That narrow valley, or espy
Aught there to win his wandering eye;
But youthful memory pictures still
Each bush and stone that specked the hill;
The braes with tangled copsewood green;
The mossy cliffs that rose between;
The fern that fringed each fairy nook;
The mottled mead; the mazy brook,
That underneath its osier shade
Still to the wild its music made.

Among the flowers and tedded hay,
I see an elfin band at play;
Blithe swinging on the greenwood bough,
Or guiding mimic wain and plough;
Intent a summer booth to build,
Or tilling each his tiny field:

Or, proudly ranged in martial rank,
They muster on the mossy bank,
With rushy helm and sword of sedge,
A bloodless Border war to wage.

Anon, with lapse of circling years,
In other guise that group appears,
As childhood's gamesome mood gives place
To manly thought and maiden grace.
Beneath yon rock with lichens hoar,
Of fabled fays the haunt of yore,
They sit beside the *Verter* spring:
I hear the low winds whispering
The mournful ballad's simple strain;
Or breathing flute awakes again
The echoes of each sylvan grot
With many a sweetly-melting note.

Or, from the chambers of the north,
Comes Winter with his tempests forth,
Athwart the shivering glebe to fling
The flaky snow-drift from his wing,
Shrouding, with many a fleecy fold,
The bosky dell and battle wold—
While, banished from his half-ploughed field,
The hind essays the flail to wield;
And, o'er the hills, the perilous road
Alone by shepherd's foot is trode,
Who gathers on the furzy heath
His flocks dug from the smothering wreath:
Then it was more than joy to meet
With long-loved friends in that retreat.
And still that valley's rude recess
Could charm in winter's wildest dress;
Whether the mountain speat has drowned
With mingled floods the meadow ground,
And through their hundred sluices, break
The headlong currents to the lake;—
Or the choked torrent's deafened flow
Is hushed in crystal caves below,
And, down the cliffs, the trickling rills
Congeal in columned icicles.
But when day's hasty steps retire,
Still sweeter by the blazing fire
In that low parlour's narrow bound,
To draw the social circle round,
Where no unwelcome step intrudes
To check gay humour's changeful moods.
Round flows the merry jest;—the tale
Of maiden cloister in the dale;
Of weeping spirit of the glen;
Of monster-snake of Worm-eden;
Of ladies doomed by Rome's command
To sift the church-yard mound of sand,
By penance drear to wash away
Foul murder's dire anathema.
Or graver history's graceful page,
Or traveller's venturous toils engage;
Or poet's lay the bosom warms,
With virtue's praise and nature's charms,
And faithful loves and feats of arms.
And 'midst that friendly circle now,
I mark a youth with open brow,
And thoughtful blue eyes beaming mild,
And temples wreathed with clusters wild
Of light brown hair. The pensive grace
Upon his features, seems the trace
Of thought more tender and refined
Than dawns upon the vulgar mind;
But oft across his blooming cheek
Flushes a quick and hectic streak,
Like that which in an Indian sky,
Though cloudless, tells of danger nigh;
Danger—to tear from life and fame
The latest of a gentle name.

How fearful to affection's view
That blush more bright than beauty's hue!
Where, sad as cypress wreath, the rose
Amid consumption's ruin glows,
And decks with gay and treacherous bloom
The untimely passage to the tomb.

Now, scattered far the smiling flowers
That grew around these rustic bowers—
Ungentle hearts and strangers rude
Have passed along its solitude:
The hearth is cold—the walls are bare
That heard my grandsire's evening prayer—
Gone—even the trees he planted there!
Yet still, dear friend, methinks 'twere sweet
To trace once more that loved retreat:
Still, there, where'er my footsteps roam,
"My heart, untravelled," finds a home.
For 'midst these Border mountains blue,
And vales receding from the view,
And lonely lakes, and misty fells,
Some nameless charm for ever dwells—
Some spirit that again can raise
The visions of departed days,
And thoughts unuttered, undefined,
That gleamed across my infant mind.
Oh, lovely was the blest control
Which came like music o'er my soul,
While there—a rude untutor'd boy,
With heart tuned high to Nature's joy;
Subdued by beauty's winning form,
Or kindling 'midst the mountain storm;
Alive to feeling's gentle smart,
Which wakes, but does not waste the heart!
I dreamt not of the workings deep
Of wilder passions yet asleep.
Long from these native haunts estranged,
My home but not my heart is changed:
Amidst the city's feverish stir,
'Tis still a mountain wanderer.
And though (if bodings be not vain)
Far other roamings yet remain,
In climes, where, 'mid the unwonted vales,
No early friend the wanderer hails,

Nor well-known hills arise to bless
His walks of pensive loneliness;
Yet still shall fancy haunt with you
These scenes beloved when life was new,
And oft with tender zeal return
By yon deserted tomb to mourn.
For oh, whate'er that lot may be
In fate's dark book reserved for me,
I feel that nought in later life,
Ambition's pride, or passion's strife,
Or favouring fortune's boundless grasp,
This bosom with a tie can clasp,
So strong—so sacred—as endears
These relics of our earliest years.

Wat o' the Cleuch.

CANTO FIRST.

Wat o' the Cleuch came down through the dale,
In helmet and hauberk of glistening mail;
Full proudly he came on his berry-black steed,
Caparisoned, belted for warrior deed.
Oh, bold was the bearing, and brisk the career,
And broad was the cuirass, and long was the spear.
And tall was the plume that waved over the brow
Of that dark reckless borderer, Wat o' the Cleuch.

His housing, the buck's hide, of rude massy fold,
Was tasselled and tufted with trappings of gold;
The henchman was stalworth his buckler that bore;
He had bowmen behind him and billmen before:
He had Bellenden, Thorleshope, Reddlefordgreen,
And Hab o' the Swire, and Jock of Poldean;
And Whitstone, and Halston, and hard-riding Hugh,
Were all at the back of bold Wat o' the Cleuch.

As Wat o' the Cleuch came down through the dale,
The hinds stood aghast and the maidens grew pale;
The ladies to casement and palisade ran,
The vassals to loop-hole and low barbican,
And saw the bold Borderers trooping along,
Each crooning his war-note or gathering-song:
Oh, many a rosy cheek changed its hue,
When sounded the slogan of Wat o' the Cleuch!

As downward they passed by the Jed and the Roule,
The monk took his crosier, his cord, and his cowl,
And kneeled to the Virgin with book and with bead,
And said Ave-Maria and muttered his creed,
And loudly invoked, as he clasped the rood,
Saint Withold, Saint Waldave, Saint Clare, and
Saint Jude:
He dreaded the devil, to give him his due,
But held him as nothing to Wat o' the Cleuch.

The abbot and monks of Jedwort well knew
When there was aught to gain,
That neither quoif, nor bead, nor book,
Nor penitential whine and look,
That stern marauder e'er would brook;
He spurned them with disdain:
That late at Elsdon he had been
On evening of Saint Valentine,
And there had wrought much wreck and dole;
Had called the abbot beast and fool,
And all his horde a nest of knaves,
Of sordid, selfish, venal slaves;
Had broke their crosiers o'er their heads,
And burnt their books, and sowed their beads;
Taken, but leave, their hoarded pelf,
And whatsoever pleased himself.
And never had sin of the deepest hue,
Nor Howard nor Scroop with their foraying crew,
E'er frightened our abbot like Wat o' the Cleuch.

Wat o' the Cleuch he lighted down;
He knocked at the gate, but answer had none;
He knocked again with thundering din,
At length he heard a stir within.
"Who raps so loud?" a voice 'gan cry;
"Swith! open the door," said Wat, "'tis I."
Then some ran here, and some ran there,
They whispered and muttered words of prayer:
"Come quick!" cried Wat, and then
The door was oped by an abbot old,
With bushy beard and ronkled mould,
Who scarce could tears restrain:
Oh, how he groaned and heaved the sigh
As the stark and stalwart chief strode by!
And if his prayer then we knew,
'Twas not for grace to Wat o' the Cleuch.

Wat deigned no heed, but onward strode
To the chancel of the house of God:
He threw up his visor and helm to boot;
He wiped his brow and he looked about,
And fixed his eye on where a crowd
Of haggard friars trembling stood;
Then in deliberate way
His mighty two-hand sword he drew;
'Twas broad and long, but of a hue
Ill suited fears to stay.
For segments deep of blackened red
Its polished side half covered,
As if half-way through many a head
It late had found its way.

What frame might brook that weapon's fall!
For though the chief like oak was tall,
It reached so high, it swung so low,
It galled his shoulder and his toe;
And when that giant sword he drew,
His arm was bent around his brow:
When forth it came, the sooth to say,
It came with such resistless sway,
Woe to the wight stood in its way!—
And flickered in the light of heaven,
Like streamer of the burning levin.

Wat drew that sword, I said before,
He gave it one brandish and no more;
It was enough—quick might you see
Each monk, each friar, on his knee,
Kissing the cross, and calling loud,
"Oh mercy! mercy! spare our blood,
For sake of Him that died on rood!"

Wat gave his sword a swing behind;
It whistled in the convent wind
With ireful sound, and by ill luck
Against the architrave it struck,
Just where Saint Peter held the key
Forth to the sainted Gregory.
Down came th' apostle from the wall,
The pope, the key, and pedestal.
Wat looked behind, he looked before,
And, prostrate on the convent floor
Beheld the canonized compeers,
Amid their rueful worshippers:
Longer the scene he could not brook,
He laughed till all the rafters shook.

The grovelling monks upraised the head,
Like martyrs rising from the dead;
Around they stared in dubious way,
And wist not what to think or say.
"Rise up, my friends—for friends we are;
Why thus give way to idle fear?
All that of you I crave
Is your best blessing—'tis a task
That you behoves—that boon I ask,
Ay, and that boon I'll have."
"That thou shalt have," the sire replied,
"My worthy son, thy country's pride,
In peace approved, in danger tried.
It well becomes the brave
To live, and walk thus holily:
Kneel down, Sir Knight, upon thy knee,
My blessing thou shalt have."

"Beshrew thy heart!" said Wat in wrath,
"If that I do: for, in good faith,
Little I reck of idle breath,
Of mass or breviary;
Oft have I heard my grandam tell,
When in our lady's gay chapelle
The consecrated torrent fell
From bedesman hand on me,
How that I looked with such a frown,
As if I'd knock the dotard down,
Who that unwelcome tide had thrown
So disrespectfully.
Ne'er since that day, when weetless, young,
God shield the right and ward the wrong!
Have I from priest or bedesman's tongue
Had benedicite.

"But, sire, I crave and claim withal
A blessing more substantial;
Dost thou not see that my array
Has marched a rough and weary way,
Even from the Cleuch, since break of day?
No food nor fare for us is left;
The land is harried and bereft
So wholly by the Southern host
That now lies camped on Lothian coast,
That, save what sanctuary contains,
Nor flock, nor herd, nor store remains.
Now, abbot, thou mayest well perceive
The blessing which from thee we crave."

"Forage! forage!" the abbot cried,
Glad so to 'scape was he;
Forth rushed the monks, and fast and wide,
Even to the Baillie's ingle side,
Carried their reavery.
Some came with bread, and some with ale,
Some came with butter, cheese, and kail,
And some with doughty cogs of brose,
The dole and dread of Scotland's foes!
And—gladsome sight to warrior's eye—
Came in the haggis, reeking high
In fair and full rotundity.
The bull-trout, pike, and grayling blue,
The salmon of the silvery hue,
With wood-cock, plover, and curlew;
The heath-fowl of the mountain high,
With downy leg and scarlet eye,
The coney, capercaile, and hare,
And every forest bird was there;
With many snared the lakes among,
Numberless birds unknown to song,
If not to Bewick and Buffon.

Such only may and will I note,
As suiteth rhythm, and rhyme and rote;
Such as the grebe and gullimote,
The diver from Saint Mary's pool,
The avoset and galinule,
The bilcock, egret, ruff, the mew,
The whimbrel, and the heronshcugh,
The stint, the phalarope, and tern,
The mergenser, and midnight hern,
The dunlin, wagel, piper-cock,
The shoveller or kellutock,
The imber, from broad Ale-more lake,
The tarroch, tough, and kittiwake:
These all were got, and all brought there,
It suits not how, it boots not where.

And there was kid from Cocket-dale,
And mutton from the banks of Kaile,
With head of ox, and ham of steer,
And rib of roe, and haunch of deer,
All placed before the mountaineer.

Placed did I say? Yes, by the rood,
'Twas placed—but there not long it stood.
Vanished the beef with equal speed
As snow-ball tossed into the Tweed;

The forest fowls of flavour high
Faded in twinkling of an eye;
The mutton in a breath was gone;
Down went the sea-birds, skin and bone,
And of the haggis there was none.

The monks stood by with silent gaze,
Gaping in token of amaze,
Till up spoke Halbert of the Swire,
A son that not disgraced his sire;
Of Harden's doughty race was he,
And thus he spoke full pleasantlie;
"What would you think, my master dear?
For me I judge it meet and clear
That we and ours should winter here."
With stifled groans the friars shook;
Eye turned on eye with speaking look—
That jest their stomachs could not brook.

"Yes," cried the chief, and turning said
To abbot John, who inly prayed,
"Your guerdon worse than that will be;
Father, I have not done with thee."
A sudden and a hectic glow
Soon faded on the abbot's brow,
Like that which dyes the mountain's form,
The prelude of descending storm;
Next a dim yellow o'er it swept;
The hair upon his temples crept:
Like abbot chiselled out of stone
He sat, all still and woe-begone,
While thus the mountain chief went on:

"Father, thou knowest, our mortal foe
Of late hath wrought us mickle woe,
Hath overrun the Border land
With fire, with foray, and with brand;
That still their bands are facing north,
And wasting even the shores of Forth,
While their huge stores the castle fill
Of Roxburgh, deemed impregnable—
Could that by force or fraud be won,
Quick from our country they must run.

Though all unequal be the strife,
To win that place, for death or life,
Here am I come right joyfully;
But much—nay all, depends on thee.
Either with warriors thou must wend,
Their motions guide, their strife attend,
Or teach to these, my friends, and me
The whole cant of hypocrisy;
To con o'er chaplet, prayers to read,
To hand the chalice, book and bead;
Else as our leader thou art pledged,
For thou and thine are privileged."

"In either case," the abbot said—
And as he spoke he shook his head—
"In either case, sir knight, for me
Full hard, I ween, the task will be.
Put off these weeds of warrior trim,
And don the cowl and sackcloth grim;
Thy panoply of steel resign,
That stark unyielding brigandine,
And when thou'rt clothed in weeds of woe
Soon will I tell thee, ay or no,
Whether with scrap of creed and mass,
As genuine bedesman thou may'st pass."

Off went the cuishes and the greaves,
Jangled aloud the chained sleeves,
Down went the helm and plumage tall,
The corslet rattles on the wall;
And Wat, whose very meed was scathe,
He felt so light and free to breathe,
That swift as fire he flew upon
A friar of stupendous bone,
To reave his robes in grappling strife—
Without a stir Wat hated life.
He caught the friar by the nape,
Who stared at first with ghastly gape;
But, pricked by pain, enroused by spleen,
Or memory what he once had been,
He struck the chief a blow so rude,
It made him stagger where he stood,
While mouth and nose gushed red with blood.

The mountain warriors laughed outright,
The monks stood trembling with affright,
They knew not Wat's supreme delight;
Up to the sullen friar he came,
And asked his lineage and his name.
"What boots it you?" he stern replied,
And flung his cumbrous frock aside;
"Think'st thou I blench at mortal frown?
I'm neither come of thief nor loun,
And that is more, 'twixt you and I,
Than *some* can say without a lie."

The dark chief gave delighted grin,
And wiped the blood-clots from his chin;
"Man, thou art brother of my heart,"
He said, "and hence we shall not part;
If thou not warrior turn with me,
I'll turn a saint and dwell with thee;
Or priest or layman, friend or foe,
I love a man can lend a blow.
Give me thy hand—beshrew my blood,
If I could deem that 'neath a hood
Was brow so stern, or eye so dark,
Or heart so true, or arm so stark:
Lend me thy cowl and sober weed,
Until my noviceship be sped."

Now, gentle listener to my geste,
Restrain thy mirth if that thou mayest;
Ill suits it knight, or dame, or maid,
To laugh at truth when truth is said;
But sooth, such figure and such look
As Wat with crosier and with book,
Such rude unhypocritic mien,
No churchman's eye had ever seen;

And when essaying prayer to read
On book, by him ne'er opened,
His uncouth air and voice of thundering,
Misnaming, crossing, mixing, blundering,—
No living man the scene could stand,
Each eye was shaded with the hand.

"Now, by the heaven," said Abbot John,
"And all my hopes that hang thereon;
By every saint that churchman notes,
By all the souls of all the Scotts,
I swear—and soothly say to you,
Knight, this device will never do!"
"We'll try once more," said Wat, "and then,"—
"No, knight, I tell thee it is vain."

"Oh Christ!" in grievous fret cried Wat,
"The castle, father, think of that!
That fortress might I win,
I would not scruple, no, not I,
By night and day my task to ply,
Until I learned the liturgy,
Each word and pause therein.
Trust me, to gain your privilege,
I would go on a pilgrimage,
With palmer's creed and niggard fare,
Even to the holy sepulchre;
And if with your assistance true
The place I win, I pledge to you
A warrior's word, a warrior's hand,
One half the spoil you shall command."

"Say thou no more," the sire replied,
"Bold brother Hew shall be your guide;
And by my faith in Saint Mary,
I know not braver wight than he,
Nor one will risk such desperate game
For maid immured or winsome dame,
Or with such manhood work his way
When husbands, sires, and serfs way-lay.
At Nisbet, Holm, and Sorbytree,
Boonjeddwort, Nook, and Oxnam-lea,
Has Hew been caught and used full ill,
Yet brother Hew is living still;
His arm already have you tried,
And I should deem him trusty guide
As ever stepped on Border side.
Well thrive the progress and event!
One tenth the stores in Roxburgh pent
Would comfort much my friends and me,
And benefit our monastery.
God speed the mission! you shall want
No aid that Abbot John can grant."

CANTO SECOND.

Now Wat o' the Cleuch's gone down the dale,
But he is not in hauberk or glistening mail;
Wat has not his hound, he has not his hawk,
His two-hand sword hangs not at his back;
But Wat and all the best of his train
Have frocks and cowls of murky grain:
Spear, axe, or hackbut, have they none,
But scymitar and habergeon.
Oh never were friars so stalwart to view
As Hab o' the Swire, and hard-riding Hugh,
And Whitstone, and Halston, and Wat o' the Cleuch.

Not grieved was Wat for his cap of steel,
Nor armour doffed from head to heel,
But sorely troubled was his mind
At leaving his good sword behind;
For oft had it stood him in good stead,
And he found he had left a friend indeed:
This noted his page, a trusty elf,
And thought and judged for himself.
Away they went all brisk and hale
Down the beauteous links of Teviotdale;
Full soft and slowly passed they by
Where the towers of Roxburgh frowned on high.
But there is one of the holy flock
Whose eye is never from the rock,
Who looks as if his soul were blent
With counterscarp and battlement.

Unnoted all, seven bowmen lay
Resting upon the castle brae,
Who saw the monks pass slowly by,
And one that still upward turned his eye.
"Jesu!" cried one, with startled air,
"What mighty stalworth monk is there?
Such form as that I never knew,
Save the moss-trooper, Wat o' the Cleuch."

"Ah! may our blessed Lady above,
And all the saints that sanctity love,
Curse, wreck, and overcome for ever,"
Said one, "that restless, ruthless reaver!
I would give all my father's land
To have him there so near at hand,
Within the range of this yew-bow's shot—
Shoot at the monk, he's but a Scot."

The stout and stalworth monk, I ween,
Well heard the converse passed between;
For away he went with lengthened stride
Around the band to the farther side:
He had been taught the danger to know
Of feathered shaft from southern bow,
And all too well the English knew
The figure and form of Wat o' the Cleuch.

To Kelso they came, and welcome were they
To the abbot and monks of that abbaye;
For rich was the offering they brought in hand.
And they said it was spoil of Northumberland,
Which Scottish chief to the church had given,
To have his soul and conscience shriven
Of crime he did full sore repent—
Of murder and of ravishment.

"Sooth," said the abbot, "it would be hard
If son repentant should be barred
For ever from the gate of heaven;
The generous chief shall be forgiven

ROXBURGHSHIRE.

BLACKIE & SON, GLASGOW EDINBURGH & LONDON

Of all his crimes, whate'er the sum,
That is, or was, or is to come.
One single slight exception
I make from this remission,
And well I know that you'll approve
Of that I do in Christian love;
For my anathemas are laid
Against a thief so thorough sped,
That ne'er did warrior annals trace
Such path of guilt in human race:
At name of this stern heretic
Mercy recoils and grace grows sick;
For ruthless crimes of each degree,
For sacrilege and reavery,
His like the Border never knew;
A thief he is, and coward too,
God's adversary, Wat o' the Cleuch."

The stalworth monk, that drooping stood
Beneath his frock and scalloped hood,
His tall gigantic form to hide,
Now forward stepped with maddened stride.
And, with his nostrils breathing ire,
Close to the abbot's cheek of fire,
"Thou dunghill mass of corruptness!
What devil in hell hath told thee this?"
This said he with such thunderous breath,
The abbot nigh had sunk beneath;
But off he sprang like terrier grim,
When greyhound with his length of limb
Comes deftly up, and unawares
Growls forth resentment in his ears.
Away he speeds, but turns again,
Preserved from danger by disdain,
And views with dark malicious eye
His tall indignant enemy;
So stood the priest, aghast and shrunk,
Gazing upon the hideous monk.

But brother Hew, now Prior called,
The danger saw and was appalled;
Up to the monk he sped apace,
Scowled dark, and browed him face to face;
"Thou beast," he said, "thou dolt, for shame!
Disgrace of church and bedesman's name!
I knew some outrage thou wouldst do,
But Father John would have it so;
Think, for a moment, think and rue,
For what you came and what is due."

When Prior Hew this speech began,
The monk seemed waxing more than man;
Up stretched his form, his breath he drew,
His breast like chest of war-horse grew;
But noting Hew's well-feigned wrath,
His rage subsided, and his breath
Came sounding forth as violently
As winter blast on casement high.
One word there was, "*for what he came?*"
That was the word his pride to tame,
And low he bent, as if afraid
Of what was done and what was said.

But those who tried that chief to cow
Had, by my say, too much ado;
Not brooking slight, or stern control,
A flame impetuous was his soul,
And neither danger nor distress
Could that resistless flame suppress.
"Down on your knees," the prior said:
Reluctantly the monk obeyed;
"Now first, repentant for all this,
The abbot's garment thou must kiss."
"Pah!" cried the monk, "out on such stain!"
And spit upon't, and spit again.

All were amazed, the prior most,
Regretting all thus madly lost.
He seized the monk by force outright,
And called for help 'gainst maniac might;
But Wat's right humble holy weed
His wayward mood not lessened,
For though the friar at first hold
Bore down to earth his giant mould,
Like ocean-wave's indignant sway,
O'erwhelming bark that dares assay
To ride o'er its capacious breast,
So rose the chief above the priest;
But in the struggle them between
Both their broad scymitars were seen;—
Upraised the monks a hideous yell,
Toward the porch they rushed pell-mell,
Shricking and shouting as they flew,
"Treason! Confusion! Wat o' the Cleuch!"

Wat saw his folly all too late,
Like many a wight infuriate;
But instant danger then he knew
Hung o'er him and his motley crew;
"What have I done?" he cried, and then
Right through the crowd he dashed amain,
And in one moment took his stand
Within the porch with sword in hand:
"None move," he cried, "on pain of death,
Nor utter word above his breath!
Warriors, let none escape away,
And death to him that dares assay."

The poor Cistertians to a cell
Were hurried down and guarded well,
And now the hardy mountaineer
The abbey holds without compeer.
But much the townsmen's wonder grew;
That visitants were there they knew,
Yet neither bustle rose, nor din,
And none went out and none came in.
Paused, and stood still each passer-by,
With thirsty ear and prying eye,
Till to a mighty crowd they grew—
Wat saw, and ill could brook the view.

As in Dunedin streets, 'tis known,
Mine own right loyal worthy town,

If wight delighted 'gins to pry
With eager mien and curious eye,
Soon is he joined by great and small,
By burgess, bailiff, thieves and all,
By idle motley limbs of trade,
By beadle, beldame, matron, maid,
With gaping gaze and panting breast,
From north, and south, and east, and west,
Till all the countless throng partake
Of looking on for looking's sake,
Whate'er the object—'tis the same,
A thing of nought or thing of name;
A Highland troop of sorry cheer,
With naked thigh and bandilier;
A gallows thief, a deep divine,
A courtezan o'ercome with wine,
Or, haply, a right beauteous dame
With ancle trim and northern name;
If crowd is there, and that is known,
All is alike, I needs must own,
To mine own good romantic town.

So happ'd it on the abbaye strand,
That night our chief held there command;
Wat saw them gather, list, and peep,
And cursed them in his heart full deep,
And rightly judged that they must ween
Some work of holy guise within.
Straight to the darksome cell he went,
Where praying, panting monks were pent;
"Haste, haste!" he cried, "note what I say,
It fits you quickly to obey:
Here is a sword; I must be brief;
If you have any small belief
That such can work your frames annoy,
Sing loud to God your strength with joy."
Rung forth the hymn from out the cell
With frantic but unsaintly swell:
"Louder!" cried Wat, "it is my will;"
Louder it swelled, and louder still:
The Kelso-men slunk all away;
They liked not much to hymn and pray,
Nor like they't much unto this day.

The Prior Hew on errand is gone,
The scheme, the message, was his own,
And thus far deftly gained he
Of the governor, Sir Guy de Lis,
That he and two more monks should win
Vespers to read that night within
The fortress, as arrear of sin;
And grant remissions for reaver deed,
Of which the soldiers stood much need.
Sir Guy despised, as well he might,
This ghostly fraud, yet would not slight
The bedesmen's art, for well he knew
What in emergence they could do;
For they had proved, not long ago,
A powerful friend and deadly foe.

The shades of eve in softest hue
Began to tint the Cheviot blue;
But a darker, gloomier veil was wore
On the swarthy brows of Lammermore;
While in the vale stood these between
Dun Ruberslaw and Eildon green,
One coned with rock, one cleft in three,
Like ancient dome and monastery
That for due penance, praise, and shrift,
Their unassuming heads uplift,
In midst of mighty city's bound
With towers and ramparts circled round.

The Tweed ran slow, the Tweed ran deep,
Till round the abbaye making sweep,
It sung so loud and so harsh a note,
That it made Wat remember well
A tale he scarce had e'er forgot,
Of his own grandsire, Michael Scott,
And the three dargsmen, fiends of hell,
Who stemmed that mighty torrent's sweep,
And dammed that pool so broad and deep;
And he saw the gap stand to that day
From which the elves were scared away.
A chillness crept o'er all his frame—
It could not be that warlock theme,
But feeling scarce to minstrel known—
A dreaming, mixed sensation
Of things at hand, and things of yore,
For a bloody night lay him before!

Now it behoved the Prior Hew,
Who framed the plot, to choose forth two,
And only such he need must have
As were obsequious and brave.
Wat loved the one term from his soul,
The other made him fret and scowl,
But Hew's fair choice he must abide;
Forth stood they, ranked on either side,
And after pause and scrutiny,
"Hab of the Swire, I must have thee,
For thou can'st read the breviary."

Wat found all chance was o'er for him;
His cheek turned to a crimson grim,
As he to calculate began
On full frustration of his plan;
Till up came Prior Hew apace,
And surlily looked in his face:
"Though thou can'st neither read nor pray,
And scarce can'st word sagacious say,
And haply are but middling brave,
Yet, for good trial, thee I'll have:
One trusty friend I shall not lack,
When Wat o' the Cleuch is at my back."
"Bravo!" cried Wat, with voice as loud
As thunder from the yawning cloud;
"Bravo! my brother of the field!
There shall be skelps or we three yield!"
Then strode he o'er the chancel floor
With step of such gigantic power
That at each stride, as I heard tell,
The monks within their cell believed
That dreadful weight from casement heaved.

The night full dark and murky fell,
Slow tolled the convent evening bell,
As o'er the Tweed went Prior Hew,
And Habby Scott, and Wat o' the Cleuch,
To shrive the English bands intent—
But their last shrift was fully meant.
Jock Jardine younger of Poldean,
And Rutherford of Redfordgreen,
Brought down the warriors from the braes
Through night, and unfrequented ways;
One cowled warrior staid behind
To guard the monks in cell confined,
The rest had all their parts assigned.

Ye beauteous dames of merry England,
When you this tale shall read,
Well may you quake for your good band
That guarded Tweed and Teviot's strand
And barriers of Northumberland,
From reavers' ruthless deed.
And well this thought might you beseem,
"Oh that some voice to wizard's dream,
Or whisper from the Teviot's stream,
Would warn them in such need!"
Dread not, fair dames, for the event;
Neither in camp nor tournament,
Shall English might by foeman shent
Be boasted as his meed.
Haply some tale would better suit
Thy fancy and thy wish to boot,
Like that which happ'd on Durham field,
Which Durham maids and dames beheld,
To whom a grateful sacrifice
Was Sir John Copland's royal prize;
Or Pembroke's raid full long agone;
Or rueful hapless Homeldon.
But can'st thou of a minstrel ask
Such humbling, such ungrateful task?
No—free as stag on Border height,
As falcon's or as eagle's flight;
Free as the summer's cloudless breeze,
Or bird that swims the polar seas,
From matron's say, or man's behest,
Flow forth, flow unconstrained, my geste!

CANTO THIRD.

Old Roxburgh, oft thy halls of yore
Rang to the war and wassail lay;
As oft thy clanging trumpet bore
Loud watchword to the Border gray:
And many a song and legend tell
To mountain hind and wondering dame,
Of doughty deeds that there befell,
And of that perilous citadel
That force alone might claim.
Low lie thy mighty ramparts now,
Of many a hero's dust the shrine;
And o'er them, as in triumph grow
The spleenwort and the murky sloe,
The bramble, moss, and mistletoe,
Their gloomy hues entwine.

But, Roxburgh, who of Border blood
Can o'er thy mouldering turrets tread,
Can stand where his forefathers stood,
And smile where erst those fathers bled?
Not for the mighty honoured dead
Feel the heart-stirrings of acclaim?
If such there is, this be his meed:—
No trophy ever wait his name;
On him may never beauteous dame
Of Teviot smile: and when is run
The last tide through his soulless frame,
Then ne'er may vassal, dame, or son,
Wail for the heartless wight thus gone
Loaded with minstrel's malison!

But there were times, when he whose hand
Upheld thy dreaded proud command,
Stood much in need of courage high,
Of jealous mind and watchful eye;
And such well proven was Sir Guy.
That night he sat in Roxburgh tower
With many a knight and squire around,
Unweeting all of hostile power,
And loudly swelled the revel sound:
For on that good old Border day
They lacked not oft, as I heard say,
Good beer, and wine, and usquebhae.

"A song!" cried Howard, "and by name,
I call Edward of Walsinghame,
Whom I invoke by game and glee,
For lay he sings most pleasantlie."
"Sooth, my good lords," said Walsinghame,
"Well wot you of my minstrel fame;
To all my lays I put one strain,
As well to sacred as profane,
Nor have I more—but I can tell
What lay would please Lord Howard well:
Still will he urge it, right or wrong,
Though decency forbids the song:
My lords, I'll put you in amaze,
Wot you what Lady Howard says?"

Howard looked sulky and chagrined,
His head on clenched fist he leaned,
For sooth he felt the jest would come
Too near his heart, too near his home,
Had not then chanced to enter in
The holy men to shrive of sin.
"Ah!" whispered one, not as in jest,
"Does good Lord Howard need the priest?"
"No, by my fay," said Walsinghame,
"It is not Howard, but his dame."
Straight words were said unmeet to tell,
And hand on hilt of broadsword fell;
But every voice 'gan to prolong
In louder key, "The song! the song!"
"Yes," said Sir Guy, "that song we'll have
Of beggarly moss-trooper knave,

That merry song which well you wot,
Of greedy, lean, and mangy Scot."—

Walsinghame's Song.

O heard ye never of Wat o' the Cleuch?
The lad that has worrying tikes enow,
Whose meat is the moss, and whose drink is the dew,
And that's the cheer of Wat o' the Cleuch.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Woe's my heart for Wat o' the Cleuch!

Wat o' the Cleuch sat down to dine
With two pint stoups of good red wine;
But when he looked they both were dry;
Oh, poverty parts good company!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Oh for a drink to Wat o' the Cleuch!

Wat o' the Cleuch came down the Tyne,
To woo a maid both gallant and fine;
But as he came o'er by Dick o' the Side,
He smelled the mutton and left the bride.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
What think ye now o' Wat o' the Cleuch!

Wat o' the Cleuch came here to steal,
He wanted milk, and he wanted veal;
But ere he wan o'er the Beetleston brow
He houghed the calf and eated the cow!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Well done, doughty Wat o' the Cleuch!

Wat o' the Cleuch came here to fight,
But his whittle was blunt and his nag took fright,
And the braggart he did what I dare not tell,
But changed his cheer at the back of the fell.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
O for a croudy to Wat o' the Cleuch!

Wat o' the Cleuch kneeled down to pray,
He wist not what to do or say;
But he prayed for beef and he prayed for bree,
A two-hand spoon and a haggis to pree.
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
That's the cheer for Wat o' the Cleuch!

But the devil is cunning as I heard say,
He knew his right and hauled him away;
And he's over the Border and over the heuch,
And off to hell with Wat o' the Cleuch!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Lack-a-day for Wat o' the Cleuch!

But of all the wights in poor Scotland,
That ever drew bow or Border brand,
That ever drove English bullock or ewe,
There never was thief like Wat o' the Cleuch!
Wat o' the Cleuch! Wat o' the Cleuch!
Down for ever with Wat o' the Cleuch!

Loud laughed the chiefs, but were annoyed
By the three monks that stood aside;
Struggling they seemed and sore aghast,
And two still held the other fast.
"Your pardon, knights," said Prior Hew,
"I grieve for stir where honour's due,
But this poor brother, by God's will,
With fits like this is troubled still."
"De Gray," said Guy, who noted then
Three monks of such unsaintly mien,
"De Gray, lead these to Colbert's cell,
And see them stripped and searched well;
Nay hold—much need have we to care;
Search them before me where they are."

Short breathed the monks, and 'gan to feel
Beneath their gowns for hilt of steel,
And stood up grimly by the wall—
(It was a moment critical!)
In posture that bespoke the mind,
With foot advanced and arm behind,
With floating gowns of sackcloth gray,
And eyes bent forward on their prey;
There the redoubted bedesmen stood,
Panting like wolves that thirst for blood.

But chiefly he of giant mien,
That stood the other two between,
Stooped onward with such dire intent
As if each nerve were strained and bent;
Like dog that notes on greensward lone
The burrowing moldwarp's heaving cone;
Stands all intent his skill to try,
With turned-up ear and steadfast eye,
With starting frame, and lifted foot,
In guise most wistfully acute,
Seeming the hair-breadth time to know
When he must spring on weetless foe—
As staunch, as steady, and as true,
Stood the dark reaver, Wat o' the Cleuch.

To call his serfs forth stepped De Gray,
His captain's orders to obey;
But at that moment rose a yell
Of dire alarm—loud rang the bell,
The trumpet sounded, and a rout
Was heard around, within, without!
All in amazement looked around,
And straight to quit the hall were bound
When cautious Guy called them to stay
And seize the monks whate'er the fray.

That was the word of fear and scathe,
The word of tumult, broil, and death:
"Hurra!" cried Wat, and onward flew
Like fire-brand that outwings the view,
And at Sir Guy he made a blow
That fairly cleft that knight in two;
Then Walsinghame he turned upon,
And pinned him through the shoulder-bone
Against the pavement, and the while,
Half said, half sung, with grizly smile,
"Out, songster, with thy chorus true,
What think ye now of Wat o' the Cleuch?"

"Ah! ruffian, ah!—for shame! for shame!"
Were the last words of Walsinghame.

Through toil, through terror, and through blood.
Like stayless burst of mountain flood,
Wat bore before him all outright,
For battle was his sole delight:
Stout Prior Hew was sore bested,
For whiles he fought and whiles he fled;
But aye, whenc'er he aim'd a blow,
Not farther pressed his fated foe.
Right sore it grieveth me to tell
What to brave Halbert Scott befell:
Hard was he set, as well might be,
For still they fought it one to three;
No buckler bound was on his wrist,
No cuirass on his manly breast,
Though strong his arm, it was foreworn,
And to the wall his back was borne.

Wat saw his danger, and amain
Flew to his aid, but flew in vain;
For with such fury fell his stroke,
That from the hilt his broadsword broke:
"Woe worth thy dwarf and dirty blade,
And forge where such a thing was made!"
Cried Wat, "Oh for my friend in need!
Now do I lack my sword indeed.
Lay on them, cousin!—bravely done!
Down with the dastards one by one!"
This said, he griped a Southron fast,
And held him firm before his breast,
As shield 'gainst many a coming blow
That slew the friend but not the foe:
His sword secured, he threw him then
With dash among the Englishmen;
Then after him impetuous flew,
Crying, "That's the cheer for Wat o' the Cleuch."
Four only now remained alive,
Who, deeming it unmeet to strive,
Made for the door through kinsmen's blood,
But Prior Hew before them stood;
Scarce could he Mary's name have said
Ere all the four were grovelling laid.
Of all the chiefs remained not one,
Nor knew their troops of what was done;
And when the Scots first paused and thought,
And saw the ruin that was wrought,
They stood and gazed in silence on,
Scarce trowing what themselves had done.

"Now by the might of Michael Scott,"
Said Wat, "though I full oft have fought,
And changed with Southrons many a blow,
I ne'er got full revenge till now."
"Ah, my brave chief!" said Hab, "I fear
That this deray will cost you dear;
Would that my brother John were here!"
He staggered, sunk, no more he said,
With the next breath, 'mong foemen laid,
His great and gallant spirit fled.

The Borderer could not this withstand,
He took the dead man by the hand—
"Ah, Hab!" he sighed, "long will it be
Ere I find right-hand man like thee!
Sore will I miss thy arm of might
Before the break of morning light,
And, reft of stay so firm and true,
I may be then as thou art now;
But if I live—by Saint Marye,
By all the love I bore to thee,
Thy death shall well revenged be!"

Still the alarm without was dire;
The town by that time was on fire,
Which Wat's ungracious page had done,
An imp's unbidden act,
Who weened that such confusion
The Southrons might distract;
But those who knew the elfin said
More selfish aim the action swayed,
As you shall hear anon.
Howe'er it was, the Southrons ran
Forth from the gate when it began,
To help or to look on;
And when our bedesmen issued out,
Well armed now from head to foot
With sword, with spear, and shield to boot,
There but themselves were none.
Save by fair dames, full sore amazed,
From bartizan and tower that gazed,
Unchallenged they passed up and down,
And blessed the hand that fired the town.

When to the gate of keep they passed,
They found it closed and bolted fast,
Yet none remained within but they,
Save women weak and chaplain gray;
But through the outer court they saw
A troop that toward them did draw,
Though noise they heard not, near nor far,
Of clash of arms or shout of war.
In darkness deep to posts they win,
With light without but none within,
Resolved the comers to astound,
And with their lances safely wound.
Soon oped the gate with thundering jar,
Entered the careless men of war;
But straight the foremost, with a yell,
Reeling recoiled, and groaned and fell:
Forward they pressed, but what defence
From wounds that came they knew not whence?
The way was strait—in heaps they fell,
By whom, or how, they could not tell.
Some called out "Treason," some "Sir Guy,"
Some Howard, Seroop, and Barnaby;
But lord or leader came not near,
They would not heed or did not hear;
And ne'er had terror and dismay
O'er warrior troop such ample sway,
As through the court their flight they wing
To sound the alarm and gathering.

But all the tumults ever seen
At Roxburgh gate since it had been,
Were trivial to the clash and clang
That now before the castle rang.
Down came the warriors of the Cleuch,
In foray, feud, or battle true,
With glancing swords and plumes of white,
Dancing and flickering through the night
Like the bog-meteors, darkly seen
By moorland tarn or mountain green,
That spread, that quiver, and retire,
Things half of mist and half of fire;
So came the mountain warriors nigh,
Bedimming sight to foeman's eye.

Swift, steady, silent, and profound,
They came—save that a cluttering sound
Would sometimes whisper in the gale,
To listener's ear unwelcome tale.
Like dark descent of winter snow,
That down the night sublimely slow
Steals on the earth with silent pace,
Heaping and smothering Nature's face;
Yet sometimes burst of pattering hail
Will trembling shepherd's ear assail;
Loud bursts the wind, the storm is hurled
Wide o'er a pale and prostrate world:
As still, as threatening, down they drew,
As loud, as furious, on they flew,
The baited warriors of the Cleuch.

Wat heard the slogan, and his heart
Leaped at the sound; up did he start
With maddened motion, quite the same
As if his tall gigantic frame
Had been machine, that battle knell
Could set, and keep in movement well.
He set his limbs, his sword he swung,
With smothered shout from pavement sprung—
Whistled his weapon through the air,
For foes were none his blows to bear;
And scarce could Hew the knight restrain
From dashing 'mid his foes amain,
Though in the court of Scots were none,
And he 'mong thousands all alone.

But as more loud the conflict grew,
Up to the battlements he flew,
And shouted out, with voice as full
And fury-toned as mountain bull,
"On, kinsmen, on!—ye are the men!
Lay on them, Dicky of Bellenden,
Christy of Thorleshope!
Sim of the Brae!
Rutherford! Rutherford!
Hie to the fray!
Hah! for the battle, lads,
Hurra! hurray!"

But sorely did the Southrons gall
The Scotsmen from the outer wall,
And brave De Gray, with ready mind,
Sent round an ambush them behind;
Then, grievous sight for Wat to see!
He saw his warriors turn and flee.
Down went the draw-bridge,
The gates up flew,
Forth rushed the English
To waste and pursue
Those darkling marauders,
The men of the Cleuch.

Wat broke away, restraint was none,
And left Hew in the tower alone,
Who barred the gate; full safe was he,
But sore was Wat in jeopardy.
No stop his ardent way might cross,
He dropped the wall, he swam the fosse,
And though in heavy armour bound,
Led by the noise, the fight he found,
Back where the Teviot made a sweep
Around the vale both broad and deep.
Where none could take them in the rear,
His gallant warriors halted were,
With their enraged foes to strive,
Although they scarce were one to five.

The first attack on his array
Was o'er ere Wat came to the fray;
But when they saw his boardly frame,
And heard his voice, and heard his name,
Such shout broke on the midnight gale
As ne'er astounded Border dale.
"Hie on them, lads! be yare, be yare,
The castle's mine, our friends are there!"
He cried, and dashed on circle deep
Like lion on a herd of sheep;
But at each first or second stroke
Short in his hand his weapon broke.
So great his might, no common glaive
Could stand the blows in ire he gave;
Still was he thus forced back to fly,
Cursing the weapons violently;
His might more evil did than good,
For backward, close unto the flood,
Was borne his small but firm array,
And worse than doubtful was the fray.

An elf came up by Teviot stream,
Moving beneath a mighty beam,
Who all the while right deftly plied
With ready hand, from pouch on side,
Eating sweet cake, delightful meed,
From burning shop-board pilfered.
Ah, 'tis an imp both stanch and true,
The little page of Wat o' the Cleuch!
Behind the ranks he pressed along,
Nor once was noted in the throng
Till close up to his master's side,
When thus he spoke with crabbed pride:
"Here's for ye, Cleuch—de'il that ye be
As tired of that goad as me:"

"Ah, bravest boy of mountain birth!
My own good sword, by heaven and earth!"
Cried Wat, and as he drew it out,
Scarce earthly was his joyous shout:
"Huh! for the battle, kinsmen true,
Hie on the tikes! give hell its due!
Now for the cheer of Wat o' the Cleuch!

What bard may sing of that assail?
Off went the Southron heads like hail!
Not one by one, nor two by two,
But in whole files he laid them low.
As well might field of thistles stand
Against the might of mower's hand,
As any armed Southron crew
The two-hand sword of Wat o' the Cleuch.
Some said, but sure, I wot, in jest,
That when full rank was not abreast,
Then, ere the weapon's swing was sped,
Sometimes it severed kinsman's head:
Howe'er it was, that weapon's sway
Opened through serried ranks a way;
They rallied, wheeled, and closed amain,
Again it broke them, and again:
Like wedge of steel through pine-tree driven,
Like comet through the stars of heaven,
That little troop of warriors true
Pressed onward after Wat o' the Cleuch.

When first arose the slogan's yell
The stag awoke on Bowmont fell;
Listening he paced around the hind,
His nostrils whistled in the wind;
Something so dread was in the strain,
That night he couched not down again.
But just as o'er the ocean flood
The doubtful light began to brood,
He saw by every glen and brae,
The flyers posting south away,
Urging their flight through holt and wood,
By furious Scotsmen close pursued;
Away, o'er Border height and vale,
Onward he clove the morning gale,
And sought the depth of Otterdale.

Not to that wight my rede I say,
Nor knight renowned, nor lady gay,
Who cannot frame in mind full well,
Unless that wayworn minstrel tell,
The battle's fate; what sprung from thence;
Each fair and obvious consequence.
How the huge stores of Roxburgh fell
To one who knew their value well;
What wealth the monks of Jedwort won,
How sore they rued ere all was done;
How the invading Southron host
Fled in dismay from Scotland's coast;
And how the king, for deeds of weir,
Heaped honours on our mountaineer—
Who reads must frame, who reads not may,
I chuse not lengthen out my lay.

The Stranger;

BEING A FURTHER PORTION OF THE RECLUSE, A POEM.

Fair was the scene and wild—a lonely tarn
Lay bosomed in the hill; and it was calm
As face of slumbering childhood—yea, so calm
That magic mirror of the mountain reign
Was spread, that vision scarcely could discern
The water from the land, or rightly mark
The greensward patch, the hazel bush, the rock,
From those fair copies on the element,
The shadow from the substance—save that one
Was softer and more delicately green.

A traveller came along—tall was his steed,
And rich that steed's caparison—but he,
The rider, was a man uncouth to view;
For his attire was not like other men's:
His beard was all untrimmed, and his fair locks
Seemed tanned by suns and bleached by the rain;
The sweltered tufts had hung from year to year,
Nor had the spikes of disentangling comb
Scared their inhabitants. A man he was
Regardless of the world and the world's scorn.
Red was the corner of his eye, and yet
It seemed to beam a glance of living flame:
A ray scarce earthly hung upon its sphere;
A spark was lurking there, which, just as chanced,
The substance that enkindled it would show
The fiend or cherub. On that traveller came,
Slow and indifferent—solemn were his thoughts,
Determined but astray; still from his breast
Issued a hollow sound like one who prayed,
Or sung some holy hymn, but still his eye,
His red and troubled eye, turned ruefully
(Mixed with a nameless feeling of delight)
Upon that peaceful solitary lake.
Ah! did he deem he saw portrayed there,
A vision of that distant future world
To which the yearning soul so fondly clings?
And did he ween that beauteous baseless shade
An emblem of that long eternity
So shaped to human longings?—Righteous One!
That ever eye that gazes on thy works
Should on the soul such motley visions fling!
Slow passed he on, and still the solemn sound
Flowed from his breast, although his lips not moved.

A boy came from the mountains, tripping light
With basket on his arm—and it appeared
That there was butter there, for the white cloth,
That over it was spread, not unobserved,
In tiny ridges gently rose and fell,
Like graves of children covered o'er with snow;
And by one clumsy fold the traveller spied
One roll of yellow treasure, all as pure
As primrose bud reflected in the lake.
"Boy," said the stranger, "wilt thou hold my steed
Till I walk round the corner of that mere!

When I return I will repay thee well."
The boy consented—touched his slouching hat
Of broad unequal brim with ready hand,
And set his basket down upon the sward.

The traveller went away—but ere he went
He stroked his tall brown steed, and looked at him
With kind, but yet not unregretful eye.
The boy stood patient—glad was he to earn
The little pittance; well the stripling knew
Of window in the village, where stood ranged
The brown and tempting cakes well sprinkled o'er
With the sham raisin and deceitful plum;
And, by corporeal functions swayed, his mind
Forestalled the luxury with supreme delight.

Long, long he patient stood: the day was hot,
The butter ran in streamlets, and the flies
Came round in thousands—o'er the horse's head
A moving, darkening canopy they hung,
Like the first foldings of the thunder-cloud
That, gathering, hangs on Bowfell's hoary peak.

The stranger came not back; the little boy
Cast many a wistful look—his mind was mazed,
Like as a brook that travels through the glade,
By complicated tanglement involved,
Not knowing where to run; and haply he
Had sunk inert, but that in patience, or
Perhaps incited by a curious mind,
He cast his eyes to east, and west, and north;
But nothing save the rocks, and trees, and walls,
(Of gray stones built, and covered on the top
Sheepfold-wise, with a cope of splintered flags,
That half-diverging stood upon their edge
And half-reclining lay) came in the range
Of his discernment. Some full bitter tears
At length came flowing down the poor boy's cheek.

The steed was all impatience—high his head.
And higher still his ears were reared aloft;
For his full eye (nigh blinded by a shade
Of stubborn leather—a half round it was,
In shape like to the holy moon, when she
Glides o'er the midnight heaven on silent foot,
When half her course and some few stages more
Already have been run)—that eye was fixed
On a huge stone, that on the mountain lay
Like dome of eastern temple, or the mosque
Where pagans worship. Loudly did he neigh;
For he mistook it for a gallant steed
Feeding in peaceful quiet—while, alas!
He was compelled to stand upon the road,
Held by a fretful boy the live-long day.
His fore-hoof, mailed with an iron shell
That shone like silver, fiercely did he strike
Against the sounding earth—up rose the dust
And fire withal, like to the smouldering smoke
And flash that rises from the evening gun
Of perverse hind, that in concealment lies
To watch the timid hare—relentless sport!
And then his tail, which farrier's hand obscene
Had rudely mauled, and sore curtailed withal,
And by incision cruel and the help
Of pullied cords made that point up to heaven
Which God ordained should hang towards the earth
With graceful sweep—oh shame! that impious man
Should in unrighteous pride thus lay exposed
Unto the stifled winds and eye of day
What nature meant to hide!—this tail was heard
Whistling across the ambient air, with sound
Of blasting wrath, loud as the choral hymn
Of mountain spirit, when by fits he sings
The prelude of the storm within the caves
Of gray Helvellyn. Loudly wept the boy,
And much he feared; for oft that angry steed
Turned round his head with such precipitance
To dash the insects from his glossy side,
That the poor boy in veriest danger stood
To have his brains knocked out; yet still he kept
His hold, though sore beset. At length he heard
A voice rise from the bosom of the hill,
Or from the heart of that small peaceful lake,
He knew not which: it broke along the air
That wandered o'er that slumbering solitude
With such a solemn and impressive tone,
That not though heaven in distant thunder had
Spoke words of human breath, could these so much
The heart of man have shook, and all his powers
So utterly astounded. On it came
With gathering boom—loud and more loud it came,
And passing, died upon the trembling wind,
Or crept into the silence of the hill,
Like startled spirit, and was heard no more!
It was a beetle: somewhere it had been
At elfish carol on that mountain's breast,
Or haply dancing with the daffodils
Upon the margin of that lovely lake,
Yclept a tarn or water—or mayhap
From dwelling 'mid the maze of glow-worm lamps
That with faint radiance gild the earthly woods,
When dews fall soft and nature lies reposed,
Proud of the rayless halo round them shed,
Which only lights that one particular leaf
On which the parent hangs, like a small gem
Upon the lap of night. The boy held in
His breath for full five seconds—then again
Poured forth the bray of agony. The night
Fell dark and deep; the moon was not in heaven,
But lingering in the domes beneath the world,
(As weens the hind), throwing her yellow light
Far up the steep, on trees, and pendant hills,
But to that poor distressed, perplexed boy,
As if she had not been. The horse went round
Most unrespective; and, not satisfied
With whisking his dark tail in furious guise,
He broke on all propriety with snort
Like blustering cannon, or the noise that bursts
From heaven in thunder through the summer rain.
The boy was stunned—for on similitude
In dissimilitude, man's sole delight,

And all the sexual intercourse of things,
Do most supremely hang. The horse went round,
Jerked with his nose, and shook his harness so,
The boy waxed desperate, and oh, impious elf!
He cursed that hungry beast. The horse went round,
And round, and round; and pulling in his head
To his fore-pastern, upward made it spring
So forcibly, the poor boy's feeble arm
Was paralyzed—his hold he lost—and off
Like lightning flew the steed, that never more
Was in these regions seen! Some did report,
Though, I believe, the tale was all untrue,
That a right wayward bard, whom I regret
As having left these mountains, where alone
True genius uncontaminate can thrive,
Was cantering seen through Chester on that horse;
And others, that he afterwards became
The horse of a strange youth, not unrenowned
In early life, who undertook the charge
Of chaplain to a military troop,
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe and the drum.

No more the poor boy cried—he lifted up
His basket from the earth into the air,
That unviewed element that circumfolds
The earth within its bosom; there he felt
With his left-hand how it affected was
By the long day and burning sun of heaven.
It was all firm and flat—no ridges rose
Like graves of children—basket, butter, cloth.
Were all one piece coherent. To his home
The boy returned right sad and sore aghast.

No one believed his tale; they deemed it was
A truant idler's story, in excuse
Of charge neglected. Days and months passed on,
And all remained the same: the maidens sung
Along the hay-field; at the even-tide
The dance and merriment prevailed; the sky
Was pure as heretofore: the mid-day winds
Arose and ruffled all the peaceful lake;
The clouds of heaven passed over—nature all
Appeared the same as if that stranger wight
Had never been—save that it was observed
That Daniel Crosthwaite, who, beside the tarn,
From good Sir William rented a few fields,
Appeared at church with a much better hat
Than he was wont, for it was made of down
That by the broad Ontario's shores had grown
On the sleek beaver; on his window too
A book one day was seen, and none could tell
How it came there—it was a work in the
French tongue, a novel of Voltaire: these things
Were noted, whispered, and thought of no more.

Late did I journey there with bard obscure
From Scotland's barren wastes—barren alike
Of verdure, intellect, and moral sense—
To view that lonely tarn. He too was there,
The changeful and right feeble bard now styled
The Laureate—he too of the Palmy Isle,
The man of plagues, horrors, and miseries,
Disgrace of that sweet school, that tuneful choir
Named from these peaceful waters—he who framed
An imitation of that lay divine
Which is inimitable. Not inept,
Our conversation ran on books and men.
The would-be songster of the Scottish hills,
In dialect most uncouth and language rude,
Lauded his countrymen, not unrebuked,
Reviewers and reviewed; and talked amain
Of one unknown, inept, presumptuous bard,
The Border minstrel—he of all the world
Farthest from genius or from common sense.
He too, the royal tool, with erring tongue,
Backed the poor foolish wight, and uttered words
For which I blushed: I could not choose but smile.
"Yet," said I, tempted here to interpose,
"You must acknowledge this your favourite
Hath more outraged the purity of speech,
The innate beauties of our English tongue
For amplitude and nervous structure famed,
Than all the land beside, and therefore he
Deserves the high neglect which he has met
From all the studious and thinking—those
Unswayed by low caprices of the age,
The scorn of reason, and the world's revile."
More had I said derisive—yes, by heaven!
Much more I would have said, but that just then
He of the Palms with startled eye looked round.
And such an eye, as any one may guess
To whom that eye is known—for he beheld,
What I yet shudder to define. "Great God!"
The youth exclaimed, "see what is lying there!"
He of the laurel, who was next to him,
Nay, haply nigher to the shore than he,
Stared in amaze, but he can nothing see;
And in his haste, instead of looking down
Into the water, he looked up to heaven:—
A most preposterous habit, which the bard
Practises ever and anon: I looked
Into the peaceful lake, and there beheld
The bones of one who once in mortal life
Had lived and moved—a human skeleton!
I may not say what horrors shook my frame!
The bones seemed loose, nor film nor ligament
Bound them together, yet each one maintained
Its proper place, as loth to break the mould
In which a human soul once householded.
It was a ghastly sight!—where once the heart
Of feeling and of passion played, or beat
With ardent throb, lay the dark filmy mud
That gathers in the deep, and on the bones
Appeared thin soapy spots of greenish hue;
The jaws upon the nape-bone had fallen down,
The scull seemed looking up—there had he died,
His back upon the sand, his face to heaven!

My mind, borne on the influence of truth,
Turned instantly upon the poor boy's tale:
Rightly I judged, for there indeed we saw

All that remained of him, the stranger wight,
That lonely wanderer of the mountain reign.

It boots not here to tell all that was said.
The laureate, sighing, uttered some few words
Of most sublime and solemn tendency.
The shepherd spoke most incoherent stuff
About the bones of sheep, that on the hills
Perish unseen, holding their stations so.
And he, the tented angler of the lakes,
Alias the man of palms, said nothing meet;
He was o'ercome with feeling: it is known
To many, and not quite to me unknown,
That the youth's heart is better than his head.

Glad of this opportunity, I said,
Still pointing to the bones, "Access for you
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,
Which the imaginative will upholds
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached
By the inferior faculty that moulds,
With her minute and speculative plans,
Opinions ever changing. I have seen
Regenerative Nature prostrate lie
And drink the soul of things—of living things
And things inanimate, and thus hold up
The beings that we are: that change shall clothe
The naked spirit ceasing to deplore
The burden of existence, her dull eye
To other scenes still changing, still unchanged.
The thinking thoughtless school-boy, the bold youth
Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid,
All cogitative yield obedience up.
And whence this tribute? wherefore these regards?
Not from the naked heart alone of man,
Though framed to high distinction upon earth,
As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,
His own peculiar utterance for distress
Or gladness; it is not the vital part
Of feeling to produce them, without aid
From the pure soul, the soul sublimed and pure
With her two faculties of eye and ear;
Not without such assistance could the eye
Of these benign observances prevail.
Thus are they born, thus fostered, and maintained,
And by the care prospective of our wise
Forefathers, so to guard against the shocks,
The fluctuation, and decay of things.
There lies the channel and original bed,"
Continued I, still pointing to the lake,
"From the beginning hollowed out and scooped
For man's affections, else betrayed and lost,
And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite.
This is the genuine course, the aim and end
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse."

The men were thunderstruck; the angler most:
That man of palms and plagues, vile copyist!
Seemed compassed in wonder—in my face
Wistful he gazed, and ever and anon
He uttered a short sound at every pause,
But further ventured not. Upon the ear
Of the poor shepherd all these breathings fell
Like sound of distant waters—like the rain,
The treasures of the sky, on the firm flint,
So moveless his impenetrative soul;
He scratched his poll—the laureate looked to heaven.

More had I said, resuming the discourse,
Of subterraneous magazines of bones,
The faint reflections of infinitude,
The moon and the unvoyageable sky,
And all the high observances of things,
But that, chancing again to turn my eyes
Toward the bosom of that peaceful mere,
I saw a form so ominous approach
My heart was chilled with horror: through the wave
Slowly it came—by Heaven, I saw it move
Toward the grisly skeleton!—Its shape
Was like a coffin, and its colour such,
Black as the death-pall or the cloud of night.
At sight of such a hideous messenger,
Thus journeying through the bowels of the deep,
O'er sluggish leaf and unelaborate stone,
All nature stood in mute astonishment,
As if her pulse lay still. Onward it came,
And hovering o'er the bones, it lingered there
In a most holy and impressive guise.
I saw it shake its hideous form, and move
Towards my feet—the elements were hushed,
The birds forsook their singing, for the sight
Was fraught with wonder and astonishment.
It was a tadpole—somewhere by itself
The creature had been left, and there had come
Most timeously, by Providence sent forth,
To close this solemn and momentous tale.

The Flying Tailor;

BEING A FURTHER EXTRACT FROM THE RECLUSE, A POEM.

If ever chance or choice thy footsteps lead
Into that green and flowery burial-ground
That compasseth with sweet and mournful smiles
The church of Grasmere, by the eastern gate,
Enter, and underneath a stunted yew,
Some three yards distant from the gravel-walk,
On the left-hand side, thou wilt espy a grave,
With unelaborate head-stone beautified,
Conspicuous 'mid the other stoneless heaps
'Neath which the children of the valley lie.
There pause, and with no common feelings read
This short inscription—"Here lies buried
The Flying Tailor, aged twenty-nine!"

Him from his birth unto his death I knew;
And many years before he had attained

The fulness of his fame, I prophesied
The triumphs of that youth's agility,
And crowned him with that name which afterwards
He nobly justified, and dying left
To fame's eternal blazon: read it here—
"The Flying Tailor!"

It is somewhat strange
That his mother was a cripple, and his father
Long way declined into the vale of years,
When their son Hugh was born. At first the babe
Was sickly, and a smile was seen to pass
Across the midwife's cheek, when, holding up
The sickly wretch, she to the father said,
"A fine man-child!" What else could they expect?
The mother being, as I said before,
A cripple, and the father of the child
Long way declined into the vale of years.

But mark the wondrous change: ere he was put
By his mother into breeches, Nature strung
The muscular part of his economy
To an unusual strength; and he could leap,
All unimpeded by his petticoats,
Over the stool on which his mother sat
When carding wool, or cleansing vegetables,
Or meek performing other household tasks.
Cunning he watched his opportunity,
And oft, as house affairs did call her thence.
Over leapt Hugh, a perfect whirligig,
More than six inches o'er the astonished stool!
What boots it to narrate, how at leap-frog
Over the breeched and unbreeched villagers
He shone conspicuous? Leap-frog do I say?
Vainly so named. What though in attitude
The Flying Tailor aped the croaking race,
When, issuing from the weed-entangled pool,
Tadpoles no more, they seek the new-mown fields
A jocund people, bouncing to and fro
Amid the odorous clover—while amazed
The grasshopper sits idle on the stalk,
With folded pinions, and forgets to sing?
Frog-like, no doubt, in attitude he was;
But sure his bounds across the village green
Seemed to my soul—(my soul for ever bright
With purest beams of sacred poesy)—
Like bounds of red-deer on the Highland hill,
When, close environed by the tinchel's chain,
He lifts his branchy forehead to the sky,
Then o'er the many-headed multitude
Springs belling half in terror, half in rage,
And fleeter than the sunbeam or the wind,
Speeds to his cloud-lair on the mountain top.

No more of this: suffice it to narrate,
In his tenth year he was apprenticed
Unto a master tailor, by a strong
And regular indenture of seven years,
Commencing from the date the parchment bore,
And ending on a certain day, that made
The term complete of seven solar years.
Oft have I heard him say, that at this time
Of life he was most wretched; for, constrained
To sit all day cross-legged upon a board,
The natural circulation of the blood
Thereby was oft impeded, and he felt
So numbed at times, that when he strove to rise
Up from his work, he could not, but fell back
Among the shreds and patches that bestrewed
With various colours, brightening gorgeously,
The board all round him—patch of warlike red
With which he patched the regimental suits
Of a recruiting military troop,
At that time stationed in a market-town
At no great distance—eke of solemn black
Shreds of no little magnitude, with which
The parson's Sunday coat was then repairing,
That in the new-roofed church he might appear
With fitting dignity, and gravely fill
The sacred seat of pulpit eloquence,
Cheering with doctrinal point and words of faith
The poor man's heart, and from the shallow wit
Of atheist drying up each argument;
Or sharpening his own weapons, only to turn
Their point against himself, and overthrow
His idols with the very enginery
Reared 'gainst the structure of our English church.

Oft too, when striving all he could to finish
The stated daily task, the needle's point,
Slanting insidious from the eluded stitch,
Hath pinched his finger, by the thimble's mail
In vain defended, and the crimson blood
Distained the lining of some wedding-suit;
A dismal omen! that to mind like his,
Apt to perceive in slightest circumstance
Mysterious meaning, yielded sore distress
And feverish perturbation, so that oft
He scarce would eat his dinner: nay, one night,
He swore to run from his apprenticeship,
And go on board a first-rate man-of-war,
From Plymouth lately come to Liverpool,
Where, in the stir and tumult of a crew
Composed of many nations, 'mid the roar
Of wave and tempest, and the deadlier voice
Of battle, he might strive to mitigate
The fever that consumed his mighty heart.

But other doom was his. That very night
A troop of tumblers came into the village,
Tumbler, equestrian, mountebank—on wire,
On rope, on horse, with cup and balls—intent
To please the gaping multitude, and win
The coin from labour's pocket—small perhaps
Each separate piece of money, but when joined
Making a good round sum, destined ere long
All to be melted (so these lawless folk
Name spending coin in loose debauchery)—
Melted into ale—or haply stouter cheer,
Gin diuretic, or the liquid flame
Of baneful brandy, by the smuggler brought
From the French coast in shallop many-oared,

Skulking by night round headland and through bay,
Afraid of the king's cutter, or the barge
Of cruising frigate, armed with chosen men,
And with her sweeps across the foamy waves
Moving most beautiful with measured strokes.

It chanced that as he threw a somerset
Over three horses (each of larger size
Than our small mountain-breed), one of the troop
Put out his shoulder, and was otherwise
Considerably bruised, especially
About the loins and back. So he became
Useless unto that wandering company,
And likely to be felt a sore expense
To men just on the eve of bankruptcy;
So the master of the troop determined
To leave him in the workhouse, and proclaimed
That if there was a man among the crowd
Willing to fill his place and able to,
Now was the time to show himself. Hugh Thwaites
Heard the proposal as he stood apart
Striving with his own soul—and with a bound
He leapt into the circle, and agreed
To supply the place of him who had been hurt.
A shout of admiration and surprise
Then tore heaven's concave, and completely filled
The little field, where near a hundred people
Were standing in a circle round and fair.
Oft have I striven by meditative power,
And reason working 'mid the various forms
Of various occupations and professions,
To explain the cause of one phenomenon
That, since the birth of science, hath remained
A bare enunciation, unexplained
By any theory, or mental light
Streamed on it by the imaginative will,
Or spirit musing in the cloudy shrine,
The penetralia of the immortal soul.
I now allude to that most curious fact,
That 'mid a given number, say threescore,
Of tailors, more men of agility
Will issue out, than from an equal show
From any other occupation—say
Smiths, barbers, bakers, butchers, or the like.
Let me not seem presumptuous, if I strive
This subject to illustrate; nor, while I give
My meditations to the world, will I
Conceal from it that much I have to say
I learnt from one who knows the subject well
In theory and practice—need I name him?
The light-heeled author of the Isle of Palms,
Illustrious more for leaping than for song.

First, then, I would lay down this principle,
That all excessive action by the law
Of nature tends unto repose. This granted,
All action not excessive must partake
The nature of excessive action—so
That in all human beings who keep moving,
Unconscious cultivation of repose
Is going on in silence. Be it so.
Apply to men of sedentary lives
This leading principle, and we behold
That, active in their inactivity,
And unreposing in their long repose,
They are, in fact, the sole depositaries
Of all the energies by others wasted,
And come at last to teem with impulses
Of muscular motion, not to be withstood,
And either giving vent unto themselves
In numerous feats of wild agility,
Or terminating in despair and death.

Now, of all sedentary lives, none seems
So much so as the tailor's: weavers use
Both arms and legs, and, we may safely add,
Their bodies too, for arms and legs can't move
Without the body—as the waving branch
Of the green oak disturbs his glossy trunk.
Not so the tailor—for he sits cross-legged,
Cross-legged for ever! save at time of meals,
In bed, or when he takes his little walk
From shop to alehouse, picking, as he goes,
Stray patch of fustian, cloth, or casimere,
Which, as by natural instinct, he discerns,
Though soiled with mud, and by the passing wheel
Bruised to attenuation 'gainst the stones.

Here then we pause—and need no farther go;
We have reached the sea-mark of our utmost sail.
Now let me trace the effect upon his mind
Of this despised profession. Deem not thou,
Oh rashly deem not, that his boyish days
Past at the shop-board, when the stripling bore
With bashful feeling of apprenticeship
The name of Tailor; deem not that his soul
Derived no genial influence from a life
Which, although haply adverse in the main
To the growth of intellect and the excursive power.
Yet in its ordinary forms possessed
A constant influence o'er his passing thoughts.
Moulded his appetences and his will,
And wrought out, by the work of sympathy
Between his bodily and mental form,
Rare correspondence, wondrous unity,
Perfect—complete—and fading not away.
While on his board cross-legged he used to sit,
Shaping of various garments, to his mind
An image rose of every character
For whom each special article was framed,
Coat, waistcoat, breeches. So at last his soul
Was like a storehouse, filled with images,
By musing hours of solitude supplied.
Nor did his ready fingers shape the cut
Of villager's uncouth habiliments
With greater readiness, than did his mind
Frame corresponding images of those
Whose corporal measurement the neat-marked paper
In many a mystic notch for aye retained.
Hence, more than any man I ever knew,
Did he possess the power intuitive
Of diving into character. A pair

Of breeches, to his philosophic eye,
Were not what unto other folks they seem,
Mere simple breeches; but in them he saw
The symbol of the soul—mysterious, high
Hieroglyphics! such as Egypt's priest
Adored upon the holy Pyramid,
Vainly imagined tomb of monarchs old,
But raised by wise philosophy, that sought
By darkness to illumine, and to spread
Knowledge by dim concealment—process high
Of man's imaginative, deathless soul.
Nor, haply in the abasement of the life
Which stern necessity had made his own,
Did he not recognize a genial power
Of soul-ennobling fortitude. He heard
Unmoved the witling's shallow contumely,
And thus, in spite of nature, by degrees
He saw a beauty and a majesty
In this despised trade, which warrior's brow
Hath rarely circled—so that when he sat
Beneath his sky-light window, he hath cast
A gaze of triumph on the godlike sun,
And felt that orb, in all his annual round,
Beheld no happier, nobler character
Than him, Hugh Thwaites, a little tailor boy.

Thus I, with no unprofitable song,
Have in the silence of the umbrageous wood,
Chaunted the heroic youthful attributes
Of him the flying tailor. Much remains
Of highest argument, to lute or lyre
Fit to be murmured with impassioned voice;
And when, by timely supper and by sleep
Refreshed, I turn me to the welcome task,
With lofty hopes,—Reader, do thou expect
The final termination of my lay.
For, mark my words—eternally my name
Shall last on earth, conspicuous like a star
'Mid that bright galaxy of favoured spirits,
Who, laughed at constantly whene'er they published,
Survived the impotent scorn of base Reviews,
Monthly or Quarterly, or that accursed
Journal, the Edinburgh Review, that lives
On tears, and sighs, and groans, and brains, and
blood.

James Rigg;

ANOTHER EXTRACT FROM THE RECLUSE, A POEM.

On Tuesday morn, at half-past six o'clock,
I rose and dressed myself, and having shut
The door o' the bed-room still and leisurely,
I walked down stairs. When at the outer-door,
I firmly grasped the key that ere night-fall
Had turned the lock into its wonted niche
Within the brazen implement, that shone
With no unseemly splendour—mellowed light,
Elicited by touch of careful hand
On the brown lintel; and the obedient door,
As at a potent necromancer's touch,
Into the air receded suddenly,
And gave wide prospect of the sparkling lake,
Just then emerging from the snow-white mist,
Like angel's veil slow-folded up to heaven.
And lo! a vision bright and beautiful
Sheds a refulgent glory o'er the sand,
The sand and gravel of my avenue!
For, standing silent by the kitchen-door,
Tinged by the morning sun, and in its own
Brown natural hide most lovely, two long ears
Upstretching perpendicularly, then
With the horizon levelled—to my gaze
Superb as horn of fabled unicorn,
Each in its own proportions grander far
Than the frontal glory of that wandering beast,
Child of the desert, lo! a beauteous ass,
With panniers hanging silent at each side;
Silent as cage of bird whose song is mute,
Though silent yet not empty, filled with bread,
The staff of life, the means by which the soul,
By fate obedient to the powers of sense,
Renews its faded vigour and keeps up
A proud communion with the eternal heavens.
Fastened to a ring it stood, while at its head
A boy of six years old, as angel bright,
Patted its neck, and to its mouth applied
The harmless thistle that his hand had plucked
From the wild common, melancholy crop,

Not undelightful was that simple sight,
For I at once did recognize that ass
To be the property of one James Rigg,
Who for the last seven years had managed,
By a firm course of daily industry,
A numerous family to support, and clothe
In plain apparel of our shepherd's gray.
On him a heavy and calamitous lot
Had fallen. For working up among the hills
In a slate quarry, while he filled the stone,
Bored by his cunning, with the nitrous grain,
It suddenly exploded, and the flash
Quenched the bright lustre of his cheerful eyes
For ever, so that now they roll in vain
To find the searching light that idly plays
O'er the white orbs, and on the silent cheeks
By those orbs unillumined, calm and still.

Quoth I, "I never see thee and thy ass.
My worthy friend, but I, methinks, behold
The might of that unconquerable spirit
Which, operating in the ancient world
Before the flood, when fallen man was driven
From paradise, accompanied him to fields
Bare and unlovely, when the sterile earth
Oft mocked the kindly culture of the hand
Of scientific agriculture—mocked
The shepherd's sacrifice, and even denied
A scanty pittance to the fisherman.

Who by the rod or net sought to supply
His natural wants from river or from mere.
Blind were these people to the cunning arts
Of smooth civility—men before the flood,
And therefore in the Scriptures rightly called
Antediluvians!"

While thus I spake
With wisdom, that industrious blind old man,
Seemingly flattered by those words of mine,
Which, judging by myself, I scarcely think
He altogether understood, replied,
While the last thistle slowly disappeared
Within the jaws of that most patient beast:
"Master!" quoth he, and while he spake, his hat
With something of a natural dignity
Was holden in his hand—"Master," quoth he,
"I hear that you and Mrs. Wordsworth think
Of going into Scotland; and I wish
To know if while the family are from home,
I shall supply the servants with their bread.
For I suppose they will not all be put
Upon board wages."

Something in his voice,
While thus he spake of simplest articles
Of household use, yet sunk upon my soul,
Like distant thunder from the mountain-gloom
Wakening the sleeping echoes; so sublime
Was that old man, so plainly eloquent
His untaught tongue, though something of a lisp
(Natural defect), and a slight stutter too,
(Haply occasioned by some faint attack,
Harmless, if not renewed, of apoplex),
Rendered his utterance most peculiar;
So that a stranger, had he heard that voice
Once only, and then travelled into lands
Beyond the ocean, had on his return,
Meet where they might, have known that curious voice
Of lisp and stutter, yet I ween withal
Graceful, and breathed from an original mind.

Here let me be permitted to relate,
For sake of those few readers who prefer
A simple picture of the heart to all
Poetic imagery from earth or heaven
Drawn by the skill of bard;—let me, I say,
For sake of such few readers, be permitted
To tell in plain and ordinary verse,
What James Rigg first experienced in his soul,
Standing amid the silence of the hills,
With both the pupils of his eyes destroyed.

When first the loud explosion through the sky
Sent its far voice, and from the trembling rocks
That with an everlasting canopy
O'ershadow Stickle-Tarn the echoes woke,
So that the mountain-solitude was filled
With sound, as with the air—he stood awhile,
Wondering from whence that tumult might proceed;
And all unconscious that the blast had dimmed
His eyes for ever, and their smiling blue
Converted to a pale and mournful gray.
Was it, he thought, some blast the quarrymen
Blasted at Conniston, or in that vale
Called from its huge and venerable yew,
Yewdale? (though other etymologists
Derive that appellation from the sheep,
Of which the female in our English tongue
Still bears the name of ewe.) Or did the gun
Of fowler, wandering o'er the heathery wilds
In search of the shy gor-cock, yield that voice
Close to his ear, so close that through his soul
It rolled like thunder? Or had news arrived
Of Bonaparte's last discomfiture
By the bold Russ, and that great heir of fame
Blucher, restorer of the thrones of kings!
And upon Lowood bowling-green, did Laker,
Glad of expedient to beguile the hours,
Slow moving before dinner, did he fire,
In honour of that glorious victory,
The old two-pounder by the wind and rain
Rusted, and seemingly to him more old
Than in reality it was, though old,
And on that same green lying since the days
Of the last landlord, Gilbert Ormathwaite,
Name well-remembered all the country round
Though twenty summer suns have shed their flowers
On the green turf that hides his mortal dust?
Or was it, thought he, the loud signal gun
Of pleasure-boat, on bright Winander's wave,
Preparing 'gainst some new antagonist
To spread her snowy wings before the wind,
Emulous of glory and the palmy wreath
Of inland navigation? Graceful sport!
It next perhaps occurred to him to ask
Himself, or some one near him, if the sound
Was not much louder than those other sounds,
Fondly imagined by him; and both he,
And that one near him, instantly replied
Unto himself, that most assuredly
The noise proceeded from the very stone
Which they two had so long been occupied
In boring, and that probably some spark,
Struck from the gavelock 'gainst the treacherous flint,
Had fallen amid the powder, and so caused
The stone t' explode, as gunpowder will do,
With most miraculous force, especially
When close rammed down into a narrow bore,
And covered o'er with a thin layer of sand
To exclude the air; else otherwise the grain,
Escaping from the bore, would waste itself
In the clear sky, and leave the bored stone
Lying unmoved upon the verdant earth,
Like some huge creature stretched in lazy sleep
Amid the wilderness, or lying dead
Beneath the silence of the summer sun.

This point established, he was gently led
By the natural progress of the human soul

Aspiring after truth, nor satisfied
Till she hath found it, wheresoever hid,
(Yea, even though at the bottom of a well),
To inquire if any mischief had been done
By that explosion; and while thus he stood
Inquiring anxiously of all around,
A small sharp boy, whose task it was to bring
His father's breakfast to him 'mid the hills,
Somewhat about eleven years of age,
Though less than some lads at the age of eight,
Exclaimed—"Why, father, do you turn the white
Of your eyes up so?" At these simple words,
Astonishment and horror struck the souls
Of all the quarrymen, for they descried,
Clear as the noon-day, that James Rigg had lost
His eye-sight, yea, his very eyes were lost,
Quenched in their sockets, melted into air,
A moisture mournful as the cold dim gleam
Of water sleeping in some shady wood,
Screened from the sunbeams and the breath of heaven.

On that he lifted up his hardened hands,
Hardened by sun, and rain, and storm, and toil,
Unto the blasted eye-balls, and awhile
Stood motionless as fragment of that rock
That wrought him all his woe, and seemed to lie
Unwitting of the evil it had done,
Calm and serene, even like a flock of sheep
Scattered in sunshine o'er the Cheviot hills.
I ween that, as he stood in solemn trance,
Tears flowed for him who wept not for himself;
And that his fellow-quarrymen, though rude
Of soul and manner, not untouchingly
Deplored his cruel doom, and gently led
His footsteps to a green and mossy rock,
By sportive nature fashioned like a chair,
With seat, back, elbows—a most perfect chair,
Of unhewn living rock! There, hapless man,
He moved his lips, as if he inly prayed,
And clasped his hands, and raised his sightless face
Unto the smiling sun, who walked through heaven
Regardless of that fatal accident,
By which a man was suddenly reduced
From an unusual clear long-sightedness
To utter blindness—blindness without hope,
So wholly were the visual nerves destroyed.
"I wish I were at home!" he slowly said,
"For though I ne'er must see that home again,
I yet may hear it, and a thousand sounds
Are there to gladden a poor blind man's heart."

He uttered truth—lofty, consoling truth!
Thanks unto gracious Nature, who had framed
So wondrously the structure of the soul,
That though it live on outward ministry
Of gross material objects, by them fed
And nourished, even as if the external world
Were the great wet-nurse of the human race,
Yet of such food deprived, she doth not pine
And fret away her mystic energies
In fainting inanition; but, superior
To the food she fed on, in her charge retains
Each power, and sense, and faculty; and lives,
Cameleon-like, upon the air serene
Of her own bright imaginative will,
Desiderating nothing that upholds,
Upholds and magnifies; but without eyes
Sees—and without the vestige of an ear
Listens, and listening, hears—and without sense
Of touch (if haply from the body's surface
Have gone the sense of feeling) keenly feels,
And in despite of nose abbreviate
Smells like a wolf,—wolf, who for leagues can snuff
The scent of carrion bird, by fowler killed,
Killed but not found, or little vernal kid
Yeaned in the frost, and soon outstretched in death,
White as the snow that serves it for a shroud.

Therefore James Rigg was happy, and his face
Soon brightened up with smiles, and in his voice
Contentment spoke most musical; so when
The doctor ordered his most worthy wife
To loose the bandage from her husband's eyes,
He was so reconciled unto his lot,
That there almost appeared to him a charm
In blindness—so that, had his sight returned,
I have good reason to believe his happiness
Had been thereby scarcely at all increased.

While thus confabulating with James Rigg,
Even at that moment when such silence lay
O'er all my cottage, as, by mystic power
Belonging to the kingdom of the ear,
O'erthrew at once all old remembrances—
Even at that moment, over earth and air,
The waving forest and the sleeping lake,
And the far sea of mountains that uplifted
Its stately billows through the clear blue sky,
Came such a sound, as if from her dumb trance
Awakened Nature, starting suddenly,
Were jealous of insulted majesty,
And sent through continent and trembling isle
Her everlasting thunders. Such a crash
Tore the foundations of the earth, and shook
The clouds that slumbered on the breast of heaven.
It was the parlour-bell that suddenly
An unknown hand had rung. I cast my eyes
Up the long length of bell-rope, and I saw
The visible motion of its iron tongue;
By Heaven, I *saw* it tingling! Fast at first,
Oh, most unearthly fast, then somewhat slower,
Next very slow indeed, until some four
Or half-a-dozen minutes at the most,
By Times's hand cut from off the shortened hour
It stopped quite of itself—and idly down
Like the sear leaf upon the autumnal bough
Dangled! * * * *

* * * * *

The Gude Greye Katt.

There wase ane katt, and ane gude greye katt,
That duallit in the touir of Blain;
And mony haif hearit of that gude katt,
That neuir shall heare agayn.

Scho had ane brynd upon her backe,
And ane brent abone hir bree;
Hir culoris war the merilit heuis
That dappil the krene berrye.

But scho had that withyn hir ee
That man may neuir declaire,
For scho had that withyn hir ee
Quhich mortyl dochtna beare.

Sumtymis ane ladye sochte the touir,
Of rych and fayre beautye;
Sumtymis ane maukyn cam therin,
Hytchyng rycht wistfullye.

But quhan they serchit the touir of Blain,
And socht it sayre and lang,
They fande nocht but the gude greye katt
Sittyng thrummyng at hir sang;

And up scho rase and pacit hir wayis
Full stetlye ower the stene,
And streikit out hir braw hint-leg,
As nocht at all had bene.

Weil mocht the wyfis in that kintrye
Rayse up ane grefous stir,
For neuir ane katt in all the lande
Durst moop or melle wyth hir.

Quhaneuir theye lukit in her fece,
Their fearis greue se ryfe,
Theye snirtit and theye yollit throu frychte,
And rann for dethe and lyfe.

The Lairde of Blain he had ane spouis,
Beth cumlye, gude, and kynde;
But scho had gane to the landis of pece,
And left him sad behynde;

He had seuin dochteris all se fayre,
Of mayre than yerdlye grece,
Seuin bonnyer babyis neuir braithit ayre,
Or smylit in parentis fece.

Ane daye, quhan theye war all alane,
He sayde with hevye mene;
"Quhat will cum of ye, my deire babyis,
Now quhan your moderis gene?

"O quha will leide your tendyr myndis
The pethe of ladyhoode,
To thynke as ladye ocht to thynke,
And feele as mayden sholde?

"Weil mot it kythe in maydenis mynde,
And maydenis modestye,
The want of hir that weil wase fit
For taske unmeite for me!"

But up then spak the gude greye katt
That satt on the herthe stene,
"O hald yer tung, my deire maister,
Nor mak se sayre ane mene:

"For I will breide your seuin dochteris,
To winsum ladyhoode;
To thynke as ladyis ocht to thynke,
And feile as maydenis sholde.

"I'll breide them fayre, I'll breide them free
From every seye of syn,
Fayre as the blumyng roz withoute,
And pure in herte withyn."

Rychte sayre astoundit wase the lairde,
Ane frychtenit man wase he;
But the sueite babyis war full faine,
And chicklit joifullye.

May Ella tooke the gude greye katt
Rychte fondlye on hir knee;
"And hethe my pussye lernit to speike?
I troue scho lernit of me."

The katt, scho thrummyt at hir sang,
And turnit hir haffet sleike,
And drewe hir bonnye bassenyt side
Againste the babyis cheike.

But the lairde he was ane cunnyng lairde,
And he saide with spechis fayre,
"I haif a feste in hall to nychte,
Sueite pussye, be you there."

The katt scho set ane luke on him,
That turnit his herte til stene;
"If you haif feste in hall to nychte,
I shall be there for ane."

The feste wase laide, the tabil spread
With rych and nobil store,
And there wase set the byschope of Blain,
With all his holy kore;

He wase ane wyce and wylie wychte
Of wytch and warlockrye,
And mony ane wyfe had byrnit to coome,
Or hangit on ane tre.

He kenit their merkis and molis of hell,
And made them joifully
Ryde on the reid-het gad of ern,
Ane plesaunt sycht to se.

The byschope said ane holye grace,
Unpatiente to begyn,
But nathyng of the gude greye katt
Was funde the touir withyn;

But in there cam ane fayre ladye
Cledd in the sylken sheene,
Ane winsumer and bonnyer may
On yerde was neuir seene.

Scho tuke her sete at tabil heide,
With courtlye modestye,
Quhill ilken bosome byrnit with lufe,
And waulit ilken ee.

Sueite was hir voyce to all the ryng,
Unlesse the Lairde of Blain,
For he had hearit that very voyce
From off his own herthe stene.

He barrit the doris and windois fast.
He barrit them to the jynne;
"Now in the grece of Heuin," said he,
"Your execeyse begyn;

"There is ne grece nor happynesse
For my poor babyis soulis,
Until you trye that weirdlye wytch,
And rost hir on the colis."

"If this be scho," the byschope saide,
"This beauteous cumlye May,
It is meite I try hir all alone
To heire quhat scho will saye."

"No," quod the lairde, "I suthely sweire
None shall from this proceide,
Until I see that wycked wytch
Brynt til ane izel reide."

The byschope knelit doune and prayit,
Quhill all their hayris did creipe;
And aye he hoonit and he prayit,
Quhill all war faste asleipe;

He prayit gain syn and Sauten bothe,
And deidis of shyft and schame;
But all the tyme his faithful handis
Pressit the cumlye dame.

Weil saw the lairde, but nething saide,
He kenit, in holye zele
He grepit for the merkis of hell,
Whilk he did ken ful weil.

And aye he pressit hir lillye hande,
And kyssit it ferventlye,
And prayit betweine, for och ane kynde
And lufyng preste was he!

The byschope stappit and sterted sore,
Wide gaipen with affrychte,
For och that fayre and lillye hande
Had turned ane paw outrychte!

Ane paw with long and crukit clawis:
That breste of heuinlye charme
Had turnit till brusket of ane katt,
Ful hayrie and ful warme!

And there scho satt on lang-settil,
With een of glentyng flame,
And theye war on the byschope sett
Lyke poynter on his game.

The byschope turnit him runde aboute,
To se quhat he mocht se;
Scho strak ane clawe in ilken lug,
And throu the rofe did flee.

The katt went throu withouten stop
Lyke schado throu the daye,
But the great byschopis fleschlye forme
Made all the rofe gif waye;

The silyng faldit lyke ane buke,
The serker crashit amayne,
And shredis and flenis of brokyn stenis
Fell to the grunde lyke rayne.

The braide ful mone wase up the lyft,
The nychte wase lyke ane daye,
As the greate byschope tuke his jante
Up throu the milkye-waye;

He cryit se loude and lustilye
The hillis and skyis war riuen;
Och sicken cryis war neuir hearit
Atweine the yerde and heuin!

They sawe him spurryng in the ayre,
And flynging horredlye,
And than he prayit and sang ane saum,
For ane fearit wychte was he;

But aye his waylingis fainter greue
As the braide lyft he crossit,
Quhill sum saide that theye hearit them still,
And sum saide all wase loste.

There was ane herd on Dollar-Lawe,
Turnyng his flockis by nychte,
Or stealyng in ane gude haggyse
Before the mornyng lychte.

He hearit the cryis cum yont the heuin,
And sawe them bethe passe bye;
The katt scho skreuit up hir taile
As sayrlye pinchit to flye.

But aye scho thrummyt at hir sang,
Though he wase sore in thrall,
Like katt that hethe ane jollye mouse
Gaun murryng throu the hall.

That greye kattis sang it wase se sweete,
As on the nychte it fell,
The murecokis dancit ane seuinsum ryng
Arunde the hether bell;

The foumartis jyggit by the brukis,
The maukinis by the kaile,
And the otar dancit ane minowaye
As he gaed ouir the daile;

The hurchanis helde ane kintrye dance
Alang the brumye knowe,
And the gude toop-hogg rase fra his layre
And ualtzit with the youe.

The Greye Kattis Sang.

Murr, my lorde byschope,
I syng to you:
Murr, my lord byschope,
Bawlillilu!
Murr, my lord byschope, &c.

That nycht ane hynde on Border syde
Chancit at his dore to be;
He spyit ane greate clypse of the mone
And ben the house ran he;

He laide ane wisp upon the colis,
And bleue ful lang and sayre,
And rede the Belfaste Almanake,
But the clypse it wase not there.

Och! but that hynde wase sor aghaste,
And haf to madnesse driuen;
For he thochte he hearit ane drounyng man
Syching alangis the heuin.

That nychte ane greate filossifere
Had watchit on Etnyis height,
To merk the rysing of the sonne,
And the blythsum mornyng lychte;

And all the lychtlye lynis of goude,
As on the se they fell;
And watch the fyir and the smoke,
Cum rummilyng up fra hell.

He lukit este, the daye cam on
Upon his gladsum pethe,
And the braid mone hang in the west,
Her palenesse wase lyke dethe;

And by her sat ane littil sterne
Quhan all the laife war gane,
It was lyke ane wee fadyng geme
In the wyde worild its lane.

Then the filossifere was sadde,
And he turnit his ee awaye,
For they mindit him of the yerdlye greate,
In dethe or in decaye.

He turnit his face unto the north
The fallyng teare to drie,
And he spyit ane thing of wonderous maike,
Atweine the yerde and skie;

It wase lyke ane burd withoutten wyng,
Rychte wonderous to beholde,
And it bure ane forked thyng alang,
With swiftnesse manifolde:

But aye it greue as neare it dreue—
His herte bete wondir sayre!
The sonne, the mone, and sternis war gaine,
He thochte of them ne mayre,
Quhan he beheldc ane jollye preste
Cumyng swyggyng throu the ayre.

The katt scho helde him by the luggis
Atour the ausum hole,
And och! the drede that he wase in
Wase mayre than man colde thole:

He cryit, "O pussye, hald your gryp;
Oh hald and dinna spaire;
Oh drap me in the yerde or se,
But dinna drap me there!"

But scho wase ane doure and deidlye katt,
And scho saide with lychtsum ayre,
"You kno heuin is ane blissit plece
And all the prestis gang there."

"Oh sueite, sueite pussye, hald your gryp;
Spaire nouther cleke nor clawe;
Is enir that lyke heuin abone,
In quhich am lyke to fa'?"

And aye scho hang him by the luggis
Abone the ausum den,
Till he fande the gryp rive slowlye out;
Sore was he quakyng then!

Doune went the byschope, doune lyke leide,
Into the hollowe nychte:
His goune was flappyng in the ayre,
Quhan he was out of sychte.

They hearit him honyng doune the deep,
Till the croone it dyit awaye;
It wase lyke the stoune of ane great bom-be
Gaun soundyng throu the daye.

All wase in sloomeryng quietnesse,
Quhan he went doune to hell,
But seekn an houre wase neuir seine,
Quhan the gude lorde byschope fell.

Then cam the smouder and the smoke
Up raschyng vilentlye,
And it tourackit awaye til heuin
Ane gloryous sychte to se;

For aye it rowit its fleecye eurlis
Out to the rysing sonne,
And the estern syde was gildit goude,
And all the westlin dunne.

Then the filossifere wase muvit,
And he wist not quhat til say,
For he saw nochte of the gude greye katt;
But he saw ane ladye gay.

Hir goune wase of the gress-grene sylk,
And hir ee wase lyke the deue,
And hir hayre wase lyke the threidis of goude
That runde her shoulderis fleue.

Hir gairtenis war the raynbowis heme,
That scho tyit anethe hir knee,
And aye scho kemit hir yellow hayre,
And sang ful plesauntlye:

"I am the Queene of the Fairy Land,
I'll do ne harme to thee,
For I am the gardian of the gude,
Let the wycked be ware of me.

"There are seuin pearlis in yonder touir,
Their number sune shall wane;
There are seuin flouris iu fayre Scotland,
I'll pu them ane by ane;

"And the weeist burd in all the bouir
Shall be the last thatis taene;
The Lairde of Blain hethe seuin dochteris,
But sune he shall haif nane.

"I'll bathe them all in the krystal streime
Throu the fairy land that flouis,
I'll seike the bouiris of paradyce
For the bonnyest flouir that blouis,

"And I'll distil it in the deue
That fallis on the hillis of heuin,
And the hues that luvely angelis weire
Shall to these maidis be giuen.

"And I'll trie how luvelye and how fayre
Their formis may be to se,
And I'll trie how pure the maydenis mynde
In this ill worild may be."

The Lairde of Blain he walkis the wode,
But he walkis it all alane;
The Lairde of Blain had seuin dochteris,
But now he hethe not ane.

They neuir war on dethbed layde,
But they clyit all awaye;
He lost his babyis ane by ane
Atween the nychte and day.

He kend not quhat to thynk or saye,
Or quhat did him beseime,
But he walkit throu this weirye worild
Like ane thatis in a dreime.

Quhan seuin lang yearis, and seuin lang daies,
Had slowlye cumit and gane,
He walkit throu the gude grene wode,
And he walkit all alane;

He turnit his fece unto the skie,
And the teire stude in his ee,
For he thocht of the ladye of his lufe,
And his lost familye:

But aye his fayth was firm and sure,
And his trust in Heuin still,
For he hopit to meite them all agayne
Beyond the reiche of ill:

And aye the teiris fell on the grene,
As he knelit downe to praye;
But he wase se muvit with tendirnesse
That ane worde he colde not saye.

He lukit oure his left shouldir
To se quhat he mocht se;
There he behelde seuin bonnye maydis
Cumyng tryppyng owre the le!

Sic beautye ee had neuir seine,
Nor euir agayne shall se;
Sic luvely formis of flesche and blude
On yerde can neuir be:

The joie that bemit in ilken ee
Wase lyke the risyng sonne;
The fayriste blumis in all the wode
Besyde their formis war dunne:

There wase ane wrethe on ilken heide,
On ilken bosom thre,
And the brychtest flouiris the worild e'er saw
War noddyng owre the bre.

But cese yer strayne, my gude auld herpe,
O cese, and syng ne mayre!
Gin ye wolde of that meityng tell,
Oh, I mocht reue it sayre!

There wolde ne ee in faire Scotland,
Nor luvelye cheike be drie:
The laveroke wolde forget hir sang
And drap deide fra the skie;

And the desye wolde ne mayre be quhyte,
And the lillye wolde chainge hir heue,
For the blude-drapis wolde fal fra the mone,
And reiden the mornyng deue.

But quhan I tell ye oute my tale,
Ful playnle ye will se,
That quhare there is ne syn nor schame
No sorroue there can be.

Isabelle.

Can there be a moon in heaven to-night,
That the hill and the gray cloud seem so light?
The air is whitened by some spell,
For there is no moon, I know it well;
On this third day, the sages say
('Tis wonderful how well they know)
The moon is journeying far away,
Bright somewhere in a heaven below.

It is a strange and lovely night,
A grayish pale, but not white!
Is it rain, or is it dew,
That falls so thick I see its hue?
In rays it follows, one, two, three,
Down the air so merrily,
Said Isabelle; so let it be!

Why does the Lady Isabelle
Sit in the damp and dewy dell,

Counting the racks of drizzly rain,
And how often the rail cries over again?
For she's harping, harping in the brake,
Craik, craik——Craik, craik—
Ten times nine, and thrice eleven;—
That last call was an hundred and seven.
Craik, craik—the hour is near—
Let it come, I have no fear!
Yet it is a dreadful work, I wis,
Such doings in a night like this!

Sounds the river harsh and loud?
The stream sounds harsh, but not loud.
There is a cloud that seems to hover
By western hill the churchyard over;
What is it like?—'Tis like a whale;
'Tis like a shark with half the tail,
Not half, but third and more;
Now 'tis a wolf, and now a boar;
Its face is raised—it cometh here;
Let it come—there is no fear.
There's two for heaven, and ten for hell,
Let it come—'tis well—'tis well!
Said the Lady Isabelle.

What ails that little cut-tailed whelp,
That it continues to yelp, yelp?
Yelp, yelp, and it turns its eye
Up to the tree and half to the sky;
Half to the sky and full to the cloud,
And still it whines and barks aloud.
Why I should dread I cannot tell;
There is a spirit; I know it well!
I see it in yon falling beam—
Is it a vision or a dream?
It is no dream, full well I know,
I have a woeful deed to do!
Hush, hush, thou little murmurer;
I tell thee, hush—the dead are near!

If thou knewest all, poor tail-less whelp,
Well mightest thou tremble, growl, and yelp;
But thou knowest nothing, hast no part
(Simple and stupid as thou art)
Save gratitude and truth of heart.
But they are coming by this way
That have been dead for a year and a day;
Without challenge, without change,
They shall have their full revenge!
They have been sent to wander in woe
In the lands of flame and the lands of snow;
But those that are dead
Shall the greensward tread,
And those that are living
Shall soon be dead!
None to pity them, none to help;
Thou mayest quake, my cut-tailed whelp!

There are two from the grave
That I fain would save;
Full hard is the weird
For the young and the brave!
Perchance they are rapt in vision sweet,
While the passing breezes kiss their feet;
And they are dreaming of joy and love!—
Well, let them go—there's room above.

There are three times three, and three to these,
Count as you will, by twos or threes;
Three for the gallows, and three for the wave,
Three to roast behind the stone,
And three that shall never see the grave
Until the day and the hour are gone,
For retribution is mine alone!
The cloud is redder in its hue,
The hour is near, and vengeance due;
It cannot, and it will not fail,—
'Tis but a step to Borrowdale.
Why shouldest thou love and follow me?
Poor faithful thing! I pity thee.

Up rose the Lady Isabelle,
I may not of her motion tell,
Yet thou mayest look upon her frame;
Look on it with a passing eye,
But think not thou upon the same,
Turn away and ask not why;
For if thou darest look again,
Mad of heart, and seared of brain,
Thou shalt never look again!

What can ail that short-tailed whelp?
'Tis either behind or far before,
And it hath changed its whining yelp
To a shortened yuff—its little core
Seems bursting with terror and dismay,
Yuff, yuff, hear how it speeds away.
Hold thy peace, thou yemering thing,
The very night-wind's slumbering,
And thou wilt wake to woe and pain
Those that must never wake again.

Meet is its terror and its flight,
There's one on the left and two on the right;
But save the paleness of the face,
All is beauty and all is grace.
The earth and air are tinged with blue;
There are no footsteps in the dew;
Is this to wandering spirits given,
Such stillness on the face of heaven?
The fleecy clouds that sleep above
Are like the wing of beauteous dove,
And the leaf of the elm-tree does not move,
Yet they are coming! and they are three!
Jesu Maria! can it be!

THE CONCLUSION.

Sleep on, fair maiden of Borrowdale!
Sleep, O sleep, and do not wake;
Dream of the dance, till the foot so pale,
And the beauteous ankle shiver and shake;
Till thou shalt press, with feeling bland,
Thine own fair breast for lover's hand.

Thy heart is light as summer breeze,
Thy heart is joyous as the day;
Man never form of angel sees,
But thou art fair as they.
So lovers ween, and so they say,
So thine shall ween for many a day.
The hour's at hand, O woe is me!
For they are coming, and they are three!

The Cherub.

Was it not lovely to behold
A cherub come down from the sky;
A beauteous thing of heavenly mould,
With ringlets of the wavy gold,
Dancing and floating curiously!
To see it come down to the earth,
This beauteous thing of heavenly birth;
Leaving the fields of balm and bliss,
To dwell in such a world as this?

I heard a maiden sing the while
A strain so holy, it might beguile
An angel from the radiant spheres,
That have swum in light ten thousand years;
Ten times ten thousand is too few—
Child of heaven, can this be true?
And then I saw that beauteous thing
Slowly from the clouds descending,
Brightness, glory, beauty blending,
In the mid air hovering.
It had also a halo round its head;
It was not of the rainbow's hue,
For in it was no shade of blue,
But a beam of amber mixed with red,
Like that which mingles in the ray
A little after the break of day.
Its raiment was the thousand dyes
Of flowers in the heavenly paradise;
Its track a beam of the sun refined,
And its chariot was the southern wind.
My heart danced in me with delight,
And my spirits mounted at the sight,
And I said within me, "It is well;
But where the bower or peaceful dell
Where this pure heavenly thing may dwell?"
Then I bethought me of the place
To lodge the messenger of grace;
And I chose the ancient sycamore,
And the little green by Greta's shore:
It is a spot so passing fair,
That sainted thing might sojourn there.

Go tell yon stranger artisan,
Build as quickly as he can.
Heaven shield us from annoy!
What shall form this dome of joy?
The leaf of the rose would be too rude
For a thing that is not flesh and blood;
The walls must be of the sunny air,
And the roof the silvery gossamer,
And all the ceiling, round and round,
Wove half of light and half of sound;
The sounds must be the tones that fly
From distant harp, just ere they die;
And the light the moon's soft midnight ray,
When the cloud is downy, and thin, and gray.
And such a bower of light and love,
Of beauty and of harmony,
In earth below, or heaven above,
No mortal thing shall ever see.

The dream is past, it is gone away!
The rose is blighted on the spray:
I look behind, I look before,
The happy vision is no more!
But in its room a darker shade
Than eye had pierced, or darkness made.
I cannot turn, yet do not know
What I would, or whither go;
But I have heard, to heart of sin,
A small voice whispering within,
'Tis all I know, and all I trust,
"That man is weak, but God is just."

Peter of Barnet.

Peter of Barnet—knowest thou such a man?
'Tis meet thou shouldest, for he's a manual
Which one may ever read. I love old Peter,
Not for his genius or stupendous science,
For he has neither; while his outward man,
Mien, word, and manner, has no other gloss
Than what the stubborn hand of Nature framed
By mallet and by chisel; but he is
A character distinct: I ever love
A man that is so; many have I known,
And many studied with poetic eye.

Peter is one—the slave of keen sensation.
So obviously affected is his heart
By what he hears and sees, that passion there
Holds everlasting coil: further than these
Peter makes no research; they are enough
For any heart to brook. I oft have weened,
If Peter neither saw nor heard, he would
Be happier than he is.—"What boy is that
At whom you scold so much," said I, "good Peter?"

"Rascal!" said he, "he is as great a knave
As wags beneath the sun; a saucy knave,
Whom I have reared and nourished as my own;
His mother was a vagrant—no good dame,
I ween, was she;—she came unto my house
One rainy summer eve, followed by him,

That naughty rogue—a little urchin then,
Not five years old; brown with the sun he was,
And ragged as a colt; his head was bare,
And weather-beaten like the tufted moss.

Far, far behind he lagged, for he was lame,
And sore bedraggled—by his foot still kept
A little dog, his fellow traveller
And bosom friend. I felt, I wot not how,
For the young imp, for he came wading on
Through mud and mire, halting most woefully.
The guttered road his sole might not imprint,
For it was wounded, but with dexterous skill
He placed his foot on edge, and ambled thus."

Then Peter walked across the field and back
With awkward limp, to show me how the boy
Walked out the way;—the fancy pleased him much,
For ever and anon he laughed at it,
And yet the tear was pacing down his cheek.
"'Twas just this way he walked, poor soul," said Peter;
And then, with turned-up foot, and gait oblique,
Again he halted lamely o'er the ridge,
Laughing with shrilly voice, and all the while
Wiping his eyes. "I thought I saw," said Peter,
"An independence in the child's blue eye,
A soul that seemed determined to outbrave
Reproach and sufferance, and to work his way
Throughout the world, though scarce a ray of hope
Lay onward to allure or beckon him.

His supper with his faithful dog he shared;
To that alone he talked, nor heeded once
The tattle of the menials who assailed him.
Soon he was sound asleep; his dumb companion,
With head laid on his little master's breast,
Fell sound as he. Oh it was such a picture
Of generous friendship as I ne'er again
Shall look upon!"—Then Peter sobbed full hard,
And told it o'er again,—and then he laid
His head upon his shoulder, stopped his breath
To shortened pant, and with an open mouth,
And face ludicrously demure, he showed me
The way the poor boy slept, and how the dog.
I could not chose but laugh, and so did Peter;
For he assured me there was never aught
On earth seen like it:—then a second time
He sniffed in mimic sleep, while from his breast
Issued a feeble dreaming sound of plaint.
"That was the very way they slept," said Peter;
"I thought my heart would burst; yet she his mother
Ne'er looked at them—not she, she heeded not.

"I could not sleep a wink that night," said Peter,
"Nor could I think of aught but the poor boy,
The little ragged pilgrim of the world!
'Poor devil!' said I, an hundred times, I ween,
And more,—and then I turned! and turned! and turned!
I sighed a prayer for the unfortunate,
And tried to think of others in distress.
I thought that many a fair and comely mother
Shed the salt tear o'er an unfathered boy,
Who, all unconscious, lay upon her breast,
His only shelter, while, alas! that breast
And beauteous head no shelter had at all.
I tried such things to ponder—'twas in vain;
My thoughts were on the boy,—I saw him still;
The little, sun-burnt, naked ragamuffin;
His round red lip and independent eye,
The tiny conscript on the field of life,
The veteran of eternity. I wept—
And turned, and turned,—good God! said I, what's this?"

His tale was never ended, nor would mine,
Should I go on, and deftly follow him
Through every maze of feeling; but the boy
Lives with old Peter—they have never parted,
Nor ever will till death shall sunder them.
"And on my troth, when my old head is laid
Low in the dust," said Peter, "I do think
There is not one alive will miss me more,
Or think of me so much, as that young knave;
Nor shall he then be destitute, or forced
To prowl in desperate guise throughout the world.
He's a dear boy, a noble generous boy!
But I have spoiled him—all my folk are spoiled."

This is most true—I walked with Peter forth
Across the winter field, where his one hind
Drew the long furrow, who with lengthened *vo*
And *hie* vociferous urged on his steeds,
And gave harsh tones unto the chilly gale.

It chanced that on the cold wet field we found
A mountain daisy blooming all alone.
I paused, and spoke of Burns, the Scottish bard:
Peter had heard the name—I then conned o'er
The lines unto the daisy in a tone
Most tender and affecting. Peter looked
As he would look me through: he could not ween
Of feeling for a flower, and yet he felt
A kind of sympathy, that overpowered
All his philosophy.—He took a stone,
And placed it tall on end.—"Herbert," said he,
"When thou ploughest down this ridge, spare me this flower.
I charge thee note it well; and for thy life
Do it no injury."—"Pugh!" said the clown,
"Such stuff!—I shall not mind it."—He went on
Whistling his tune.—Oh, Peter was most wroth!
He ran in hasty guise around, and looked
For a convenient stone, that he might throw
And smite the ploughman's head. No one would suit;
Then turning round to me, he gave full vent
To's rage against the hind, and all was o'er.
In his first heat, he cursed the menial race;
"I told you they were all alike," said he,
"A most provoking and ungracious set;

(Peter had never told *me* such a thing).
Now did you ever see a wretch like that?
He's a good workman, and he knows it well,
But not one thing that I desire of him
Will he perform—I'm an old fool, 'tis true,
But yet methinks the man that eats my bread
Might somewhat humour me."—I thought so too.
"But ah!" said Peter, "when I think of this,
The freedom of the will, by man so valued,
Is not his own, and that how proud he is
Sometimes to show it, then I gave it him;
And when I do I have not cause to rue."
What a discerning learned man is Peter?
He's nature's genuine, plain philosopher.

That night, at board, Peter sat silent long;
Thoughtful he was.—"I think I've heard," said he,
"That Burns, of whom you spake, was a bad man,
A man of a most vicious, tainted mind,
Fit to corrupt an age—Was it not so?"

"Alas!" said I, "never was man abused
So much as he!—he was a good man, Peter;
A man of noble independent mind,
So high, that wealth's low minions envied it;
Exerting all their malice to assail
His only part that was assailable.
Keen were his feelings, and his passions strong,
Such as your own. The vantage ground was gained.
The foes of genius came, in social guise,
Luring to gusts of blindfold levity
The bard that sore relented.—These were blabbed
With tenfold zest until the injured heart
Of genius was wrung: it broke!—and then
The foes of humble and inherent worth,
Oh how they triumphed o'er the poet's dust!"

"D—n them!" said Peter: he thrust back his chair,
Dashed one knee o'er the other furiously,
Took snuff a double portion—swallowed down
His glass at once—looked all around the room
With wrathful eye—and then took snuff again.

I love old Peter! I would rather see
Nature's strong workings in the human breast,
Than list the endless dogmas which define
Their operations and existing springs.
Peter's a living representative,
A glossary to many terms, that stand
In fair-cast characters upon the page
Of the philosopher, in other form
To him unknown.—But these are fading all;
Impressed themselves, they no impression leave:
Peter's a stereotype, that for an age
Will momently throw bold impressions off,
Ever demonstrative, and ever new.
When next I visit him, I'll copy forth
One other page from nature's manual.

The Curse of the Laureate.

CARMEN JUDICIALE.

In vale of Thirlemere, once on a time,
When birds sung sweet and flowers were in the spring,
While youth and fancy wantoned in their prime,
I laid me down in happy slumbering;
The heavens in balmy breezes breathed deep,
My senses all were lulled in grateful joyous sleep.

Sleep had its visions—fancy, all unswayed,
Revelled in fulness of creative power:
I weened that round me countless beings strayed,
Things of delight, illusions of an hour;
So great the number of those things divine,
Scarce could my heart believe that all the imps were mine.

Yet mine they were, all motley as they moved;
Careless I viewed them, yet I loved to view;
The world beheld them, and the world approved,
And blest the train with smiles and plaudits due:
Proud of approval, to myself I said,
From out the group I'll choose, and breed one favourite maid.

Joan I chose, a maid of happy mien;
Her form and mind, I polished with care;
A docile girl she proved, of moping vein,
Slow in her motion, haughty in her air;
Some mentioned trivial blame, or slightly frowned:
Forth to the world she went, her heavenly birth it owned.

The next, a son, I bred a Mussulman;
With creeds and dogmas I was hard bested,
For which was right or wrong I could not tell,
So I resolved my offspring should be bred
As various as their lives—the lad I loved,
A boy of wild unearthly mien he proved.

Then first I noted in my mazy dream
A being scarcely of the human frame,
A tiny thing that from the north did seem.
With swaggering, fuming impotence he came;
I fled not, but I shuddered at his look;
Into his tutelage my boy he took.

Each principle of truth and purity,
And all that merited the world's acclaim,
This fiend misled—nor could I ever free
From his destroying grasp my darling's fame;
But yet I could not ween that heart of gall
Could be a foe to one, whose heart beat kind to all.

My third, a Christian and a warrior true,
A bold adventurer on foreign soil,
And next, his brother, a supreme Hindu,
I reared with hope, with joy and painful toil.
Alas! my hopes were vain! I saw them both
Reft by an emmet,—crushed before a moth!

Still could I not believe his vengeful spite,
For in his guise a speciousness appeared;
My bitterness of heart I feigned light;
But wholly as he urged my next I reared:
He said of all the gang he was the best,
And wrung his neck before mine eyes in jest.

From that time forth, an independent look,
A bold effrontery I did essay;
But of my progeny no pains I took,
Like lambs I reared them for the lion's prey;
And still as playful forth they passed from me,
I saw them mocked and butchered wantonly.

"Just Heaven!" said I, "to thy awards I bow,
For truth and vengeance are thine own alone;
Are these the wreaths thou deignest to bestow
On bard, whose life and lays, to virtue prone,
Have never turned aside on devious way?
Is this the high reward, to be of fools the prey?"

A laugh of scorn the welkin seemed to rend,
And by my side I saw a form serene;
"Thou bard of honour, virtue's firmest friend,"
He said, "can'st thou thus fret? or dost thou ween
That such a thing can work thy fame's decay!
Thou art no fading bloom—no floweret of a day!

"When his o'erflowings of envenomed spleen
An undistinguished dunghill mass shall lie,
The name of SOUTHEY, like an evergreen,
Shall spread, shall blow, and flourish to the sky;
To Milton and to Spenser next in fame,
O'er all the world shall spread thy laurelled name."

"Friend of the bard," I said, "behold thou hast
The tears of one I love o'er blushes shed:
Has he not wrung the throb from parent's heart,
And stretched his hand to reave my children's bread?
For every tear that on their cheeks hath shone,
Oh may that Aristarch with tears of blood atone!"

"If cursing thou delightest in," he replied,
"If rage and execration is thy meed,
Mount the tribunal—justice be thy guide,
Before thee shall he come his rights to plead;
To thy awards his fate forthwith is given,
Only, be justice thine, the attribute of Heaven."

Gladly I mounted, for before that time
Merit had crowned me with unfading bays.
Before me was brought in that man of crime,
Who with unblushing front his face did raise;
But when my royal laurel met his sight,
He pointed with his thumb, and laughed with all his might.

Maddening at impudence so thorough-bred,
I rose from off my seat with frown severe;
I shook my regal sceptre o'er his head—
"Hear, culprit, of thy crimes, and sentence hear!
Thou void of principle, of rule, of ruth,
Thou renegade from nature and from truth!

"Thou bane of genius—party's sordid slave,
Mistaken, perverse, crooked is thy mind!
No humble son of merit thou wilt save,
Truth, virtue, ne'er from thee did friendship find;
And while of freedom thou can'st fume and rave,
Of titles, party, wealth, thou art the cringing slave!

"Thou hast renounced nature for thy guide,
A thousand times hast given thyself the lie,
And raised thy party-curs to wealth and pride,
The very scavengers of poetry:
Thy quibbles are from ray of sense exempt,
Presumptuous, pitiful, below contempt.

"Answer me, viper! here do I arraign
Thy arrogant, self-crowned majesty!
Hast thou not prophesied of dole and pain,
Weakening the arms of nations and of me!
Thou foe of order!—Mercy lingers sick—
False prophet! Canker! Damned heretic!"

Then pointing with my sceptre to the sky,
With vehemence that might not be restrained,
I gave the awful curse of destiny:
I was asleep, but sore with passion pained.
It was a dreadful curse; and to this day,
Even from my waking dreams it is not worn away.

The Curse.

May heaven and earth,
And hell underneath,
Unite to ensting thee
In horrible wrath.
May scorning surround thee,
And conscience astound thee,
High genius o'erpower
And the devil confound thee.
The curse be upon thee
In pen and in pocket,
Thy ink turn to puddle,
And gorge in the socket;
Thy study let rats destroy,
Vermin and cats annoy,
Thy base lucubrations
To tear and to knaw,
Thy false calculations
In Empire and Law.
The printers shall harass,
The devil shall dun thee,
The trade shall despise thee,
And C—t—e shun thee.
The judge shall not hear thee,
But frown and pass by thee,
And clients shall fear thee,
And know thee, and fly thee!
I'll hunt thee, I'll chase thee,
To scorn and deride thee.

The cloud shall not cover,
The cave shall not hide thee;
The scorching of wrath
And of shame shall abide thee,
Till the herbs of the desert
Shall wither beside thee.
Thou shalt thirst for revenge
And misrule, as for wine,
But genius shall flourish,
And royalty shine;
And thou shalt remain
While the Laureate doth reign,
With a fire in thy heart,
And a fire in thy brain;
And Fame shall disown thee
And visit thee never;
And the curse shall be on thee
For ever and ever!

The Morning Star,

OR THE STEAM-BOAT OF ALLOA.

O blessed thing of calm delight,
Art thou a phantom of the night,
That slumberest by the lonely strand.
Dreaming of breeze from Fairy Land!
Well, glorious creature, mayest thou lie
Smiling on the refulgent sky,
For thy heart is calm and motionless,
And the stars shall view thee soon
Sailing in conscious blessedness,
Thou sister of the moon.
And every garden of the deep,
And orb that shines above,
Shall see thee gliding swift as sleep,
In holiness and love,
Over the scarcely touched wave,
Along the homeless sea;
O world of waters, the peaceful grave
Ne'er lay entranced like thee!
The moon hath bidden her radiance fall
On thy rainbow form and viewless wings,
And the heavenly voice of the rocking sea,
In everlasting melody,
To cheer the vision sings.

And well, loved vessel, mayest thou glide
Calm onward without breeze or tide.
With steadfast und unaltered motion,
Along the bright and starry ocean;
For in thy bosom's inmost cells
Some self-impelling spirit dwells,
And thy majestic form is driven
Along the slumbering sea,
As on the peaceful soul of heaven,
Unto eternity.

And well I know, to a land afar
Thy course is bent, loved morning star!
To a blessed haven far away,
Where the mines are deep, and the shores are gray,
Where human things of the loveliest hue,
Dark as the veil o'er the midnight dew,
Toil in the central deep, intent
To supply one sacred element,
Who in their hushed and dim abode
For ever dwell upon their God.

Bright creature! harbinger of love,
In earth below and heaven above,
How many an anxious eye at morn
Will look from the beach where thou wast borne,
To mark thy stately form afar,
And hail the approach of the morning star!
And still their faith, with tranced eye,
Shall dwell upon the moonlight sky,
Then turn to the mellow sea beneath,
Serene and calm, as heaven's own breath.

Thou magic journeyer of the even,
Thou self-moved messenger of heaven
Over the wave, and the still moonbeam,
Or downward in the troubled deep,
Murmuring like giant in a dream,
Or distant thunder, when the gleam
Of fire plays o'er a world asleep;
O, thou art bright with beauty and grace!
With many a collier's lovely face,
And forms of holiest joy to man,
Of radiant glorious courtezan;
Those precious things of heaven above,
Whom men, and saints, and angels love!

A lovelier vision one of these,
Than ever journeyed the moonlight seas,
I now behold upon the prow,
With eyes fixed on the wave below;
So beautiful and calm she seems.
As if her thoughts were heavenly dreams.
One dark fond youth still clings to her,
And their shadows never, never stir,
Save that upon the heaving billow.
The robe of that most lovely thing
Is moving like the gentle willow
Above some sainted spring.

And they are gone, the beauteous twain!
I look to the prow, but I look in vain;
For they are vanished into the deep,
In some dark central dome to sleep;
In some sweet coal-besprinkled cell,
In love, and peace, and joy, to dwell;
And my soul devotes her music wild
To one who is scarce an earthly child.
Softly they lean on each other's breast,
In holy bliss reposing,
Like two fair clouds to the vernal air
In folds of beauty closing.

The tear down their glad faces rolls,
And a silent prayer is in their souls;
And faith, who oft had lost her power,
In the darkness of the midnight hour,
When the planets had rolled afar,
Now stirs in their souls with a joyful strife
Imbued with a genial spirit of life,
In the breast of the morning star.

O beauteous thing! thou seem'st to me,
So full of love and harmony,
That thou bestowest a loveliness,
A deeper, holier quietness,
On the moonlight heaven, and ocean hoar,
Than eye of faith e'er viewed before.
Through the still fount of tears and sighs,
And human sensibilities,
Well may the moon delight to shed
Her softest radiance round that head,
And mellow the coal and the ocean air,
That lifts by fits her sable hair.
These mild and melancholy eyes
Are dear unto the starry skies,
As the dim effusion of their rays
Blends with the glimmering light that plays
O'er the blue heavens, and snowy clouds,
The cloud-like sails, and radiant shrouds.

Fair creature! thou dost seem to be
Some wandering spirit of the sea,
That hither comest, for one wild hour,
With him thy sinless paramour,
To watch, while wearied sailors sleep,
This beautiful phantom of the deep,
That seemed to rise with the rising moon:
But the Queen of Night will be sinking soon;
Then will you like two breaking waves,
Sink softly to your coral caves,
Or, noiseless as the falling dew,
Melt into heaven's delicious blue.

Nay, wrong her not, that angel bright!
Her face is bathed in lovelier light
Than ever flowed from eyes
Of ocean nymph or sylph of air;
The tearful gleam that trembles there
From human dreams must rise.
And who is he that fondly presses
Close to his heart the silken tresses
That hide her softened eyes?
Whose heart her heaving bosom meets,
And through the midnight silence beats
To feel her rising sighs?
Worthy the youth, I ween, to rest
On the fair swellings of her breast!
Well do I know that stately youth,
The broad coal-light of clouded truth
Like a sunbeam bathes his face:
Though silent, an unrighteous smile
That rests upon his eyes the while,
Bestows a speaking grace:
That smile hath might of magic art
To sway at will the stoniest heart.
O happy pair! O ship of love!
Like incense to the realms above
The joys in thee that dwell.
From thee I shall be loath to part;
But when I do, my lingering heart
Will sadly say—Farewell!

Hymn to the Moon.

Come forth, sweet spirit! from thy cloudy cave,
Far in the bosom of the starless night,
And, suddenly above the mountain-top
Lifting thy placid beauty, all at once
Spread a still rapture o'er the encircling earth,
That seems just waking from some heavenly dream.

Hail, soft-browed sovereign of the sea and sky!
Thee heaven and all its glories worship—thee
Worships old Ocean with his million waves;
And though 'mid fleecy clouds as still as snow,
Or the blue depths of stainless sanctity,
Lies thy beloved way—yet often thou
Art seen careering on a throne of storms,
Seemingly borne on to eternity,
So wild the hurried glimpses of thy face,
Perturbed yet beautiful!

Heardest thou my voice
Stealing along the silent walls of heaven,
And blended softly with the falling dews,
To thine aerial tower? and lookest thou down
With love and pity on thy worshipper,
Even like an angel on the humble saint
Praying on his knees within his rocky cell?

Yes! glorious as thou art and beautiful,
Hanging upon the viewless wings of air,
That, wide-stretched through the amplitude of space,
Winnow fresh fragrance over earth and heaven,
Yet art thou meek and humble as a flower
Buried in the heart of forest solitude.
And there thou lingerest on the mountain-top
Listening my song, that boasts no other charm
Than gratitude and piety—in peace
Conceived within my soul, and peaceful breathed
To thee, the fountain of untroubled joy!

Lo! all the loveliness of earth awakes
To bless and do thee homage. Softly glide
The clouds yet glowing with the crimson light
Of the departed sun, to gird their queen
With a fair circle of unfallen snow;
Yet brightened with the innocence of heaven,
Within that circle, deeper than the blue,
The tearless blue of an archangel's eye,
Glistens the eternal sanctitude of rest.
Out comes one single solitary star,
One moment shining—and then melts away
In thy o'erpowering radiance, while the heavens

All agitated into waves of light
Are like the ocean during breathless nights,
Astir, yet in the swell profoundly calm,
A type of endless, universal rest.

Nor is the earth beneath thee, Queen of Light,
Less lovely than the heavens. Thy smile creates
A dream-like pleasure through the works of God;
And all his blest creation seems more blest
When looking up to thee, and worshipping
Thy shining face with faintly-murmuring songs,
Odours as gentle as the mournful light,
And forms by Melancholy's softest touch
Moulded to beauty, in their depth of rest,
Seeming immortal and unchangeable,
Or ever varying like the breathing mist,
In fluctuations of profoundest peace,
Bordering on mirth, and now in awful trance
Like a dead countenance looking up to heaven,
By heaven rejected.

Lo! thy favourite lake
Hath thrown the mist-veil from her purest breast,
And there thy spirit in a stream of light
Descends, as it would pierce down to the fields,
The woods, and groves, that lie in silentness
Beneath their lucid atmosphere of waves.
The lake is vanished—an abyss of light
Hath swallowed up her waves—and hast thou changed
Thy habitation in the heavens, O moon,
For a wild dwelling in the glitterance
Of earth-born waters? There thy face appears
Smiling as in thy native element:
I look to heaven, and there thou art likewise—
An apparition! which is the true moon,
I know not—nor can tell—what matters it?
Ye both are beautiful—therefore both, hail,
Now and for ever—first, thou watery moon,
And then, thou moon aerial! haply one,
But, whether one or two, still beautiful,
Too beautiful by far not to be viewed,
Waning or full, without a gush of tears.

Where art thou gone? all of a sudden gone?
Why hast thou left thy pensive worshipper
Sitting in darkness on the mossy stump
Of an old oak-tree?—Hark! the owl! the owl!
He is a living clock that tells the hour
To visionary men who walk by nights
Composing poesy. And see yon star,
Twinkling upon the hill-side; 'tis the window
Of my sweet cottage: haply even now
My Mary stirs the fire, while near the hearth
My little babes are playing. Fare thee well,
Departed moon, and peace for ever smile
Beside thee in thy interlunar cave!

The Stranded Ship.

My spirit dreams of a peaceful bay
Where once a ship in beauty lay,
Floating between the waves and air,
Each glad to claim a thing so fair;
Her white wings to the sunshine gleaming
In anchored rest—bright ensigns streaming,
As if they wished away to fly
From the proud ship which they glorify.
Alas! her wings no more expanded,
High on the beach the ship is stranded,
And, reft of motion, never more
Must walk above the ocean-roar!
Yet the creatures of the deep, too blest
Within their sunless caves to rest,
In the genial warmth of upper day
Are rolling in unwieldy play;
Or shooting upwards through the light,
With arrowy motion silvery bright,
The silent summer air employ
For their region of capricious joy;
While fairy shells in myriads lying,
The smooth hard sand in lustre dyeing,
Encircle with a far seen chain
Of glory, the most glorious main.
Glad shines the sun upon the wreck,
Warming her cold and lifeless deck;
While through her shrouds with songs of love
Birds glance like harmless lightning;
And majestic hangs the palm-tree grove
Her short and shattered mast above,
Whose ensigns, meteor-like, did move,
The dark green forest brightening.
Who thinks upon her gallant crew?
Oh! far, far down in the coral caves,
O'er a hundred heads the sea-flower waves.
Her captain's heart hath long been cold
In the silent night of her watery hold:
And a ghastly troop o'er the dim mainland,
Where Hope ne'er waved her golden wand,
To certain death have gone.
They died!—but when, or how, or where,
Save that in famine and despair,
By man shall ne'er be known.

QUEEN HYNDE.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

In the story of "Queen Hynde," the bard avails himself of that mythic period where poetry has free scope, and facts may be invented at pleasure. It was when the Scots were still a nation distinct from both Pict and Saxon; when they were a bold, independent, and numerous people, extending from the Vale of Clyde to the Orcades, with Beregon for their capital. In this early stage of national existence, where the researches of history wander now in glimmer and now in gloom, but where poetry can find or create a perpetual sunshine, our author has constructed an era of events, of which the following is a brief outline.

The sceptre of Scotland had fallen into the hands of Queen Hynde, a high-minded and beautiful, but young and inexperienced girl, whose hand, by the injunction of her dying father, is only to be given to the bravest man of the kingdom, and therefore the best fitted both to maintain its independence and advance its prosperity. He also charged her to be especially attentive to dreams, as the best monitors of instruction and warning. This last injunction is soon called into use by a terrible dream, with which the young queen is horror-stricken at the commencement of her reign, where she finds herself assailed by a terrible bull, and hurled into the sea, after she had been warned in a weird song to beware of the bull of Norway; and feeling that danger is thus foreshadowed, although she cannot guess its precise nature, she has recourse for solution to the prophet Columba, and sails for that purpose to Iona. In the train of her ladies is a beautiful, but mischief-loving imp, called "wicked Wene," the concentration of coquetry and love in sport, whose sole delight it is to play the Will o' the Wisp with the hearts of wise, grave men; and while the queen is consulting with the venerable seer, this wicked Wene flirts half of the reverend brotherhood out of their senses, and even drives Saint Oran himself to a double dose of penance and flagellation. Columba reads the meaning of the dream, and soon after, his interpretation is too truly verified by the landing of an army of Norwegians in Scotland, under their dreaded sovereign Eric, who advances with a black bull emblazoned on his banner. The march of the invaders into the country is irresistible; they lay siege to Beregon itself, and the queen and St. Columba, who had accompanied her from Iona, are compelled to shelter themselves within the palace of Schna. Now or never was the opportunity for the bravest of the Scots, whosoever he might be, to appear, and win both the queen and her throne by his deeds! But the matchless prowess of Eric bears everything before it like a whirlwind; and when the saint endeavours to mediate, the grim invader will be satisfied with nothing less than Hynde for his bride, and Scotland for her dowry, otherwise he will lay the kingdom waste, and marry her perforce. He will only consent at last to win her by the chances of combat, in which, not only himself, but his enemies also believe that he must prove irresistible. And now succeeds a different kind of tournament. During the interval of negotiation preparatory to the combat, and while both parties meet on a friendly footing, King Eric falls in love, as far as his nature will permit, with the beautiful Hynde. But this is not all, for his young kinsman and successor, Prince Haco, by accident meets, and falls outrageously in love with wicked Wene, who passes herself off as the queen, and converts the prince into a rival of his own relative and sovereign.

But amidst this medley of mistakes, by which a spirit of division is introduced into the hostile camp, and an expedient prepared for the deliverance of the heroine should no other plan be at hand, St. Columba has a vision of better promise still. His ancient friend and patron, the King of Scotland, and elder brother of the father of Hynde, had a son who, in consequence of the usurpation of the throne, had been conveyed in infancy to Ireland, and consigned to the guardianship of Colmar, its king. This prince, now grown to manhood, was not only the rightful heir to the Scottish throne, but the very palladium of the nation, as it could not be freed from the invaders without his presence and aid. This important fact Columba is told by the spirit of the deceased king himself; and he is commanded, moreover, to repair to Ireland for the purpose of bringing the prince to his native home. Columba complies; but on arriving at the court of Colmar, he finds the king in no mood to part with Prince Eiden, who was his grandson, and designed to be his successor; or send him to Scotland, where he might be destroyed by his father's supplanters, if he should escape the sword of Eric in the lists. All this the Irish king, who was a worshipper of the sun, tells the saint in very unreverend phraseology; and fearful that Eiden, who was impatient for the enterprise, might accompany him, he orders Columba to quit the country that very instant. The latter is obliged to comply, but by cross winds and tides his galley is driven back at midnight to land. On the next morning, when the saint and his company despair of contending with the tempest, they are joined by a savage young Irishman of wild mein and tall stature, who engages to pilot them across to Scotland in spite of every obstacle; and this promise he fulfils in the teeth of a terrible storm, in which they would have been lost, but for his incredible strength, skill, and daring.

In the meantime, while St. Columba is thus hope-

lessly occupied, the day of combat arrives, and Eric, with Prince Haco and another chief, are successful against the three champions opposed to them. It is evident that the best man of Scotland, the only man to whom the hand of the queen is to be given, has not yet appeared. But by the original compact, the winner was again to try the combat after seven days had elapsed. In consequence, however, of a breach of the truce that had been committed by the Scots, he demands that Queen Hynde shall in the meantime be placed under his guardianship, until the issue of the final battle is ascertained. Although a hard and humbling condition, the queen for the sake of her people is willing to comply, but is saved by wicked Wene, who proposes to personate her mistress, and become a sojourner in the Norse encampment, with the stipulation that she shall not be required to uncover her face until the seven days have expired. All are delighted with the frank offer of the frolicsome imp, and place full reliance on her resources and ingenuity. She repairs to Eric with a royal attendance, but closely veiled; and the deception passes with the rude leader of Berserkars, who imagines that he has none other than Queen Hynde in his keeping. Soon, however, she manages to raise such a turmoil in his royal establishment, as makes him doubtful whether such a bride is worth having; and he is glad to transfer her to the camp of Prince Haco—the place of all others where she most wished to be. At this point he is abruptly shaken from his dream by a Scottish traitor, who informs him that the veiled mischief is no other than one of Hynde's waiting maids attended by a few giglots of the court, and that the queen has availed herself of the opportunity to remove with her treasures from Beregon to the secure defences of Dunstaffnage. While he is raging at the deception, and meditating plans of vengeance, the high-priest of Odin enters to tell him that disaster and woe are at hand from some unknown quarter, and that to avert the evil nine virgins must be sacrificed to their hungry god; upon which Eric makes over to the flamen the fair impostor and her attendants, as victims well suited to the purpose. He then rushes out to take vengeance on the city of Beregon, and forth steps the reverend butcher chuckling at the rich assignment of a queen and her ladies as a burnt-offering in honour of Odin. But just when the fire of the huge pile is about to be kindled, and when wicked Wene, now reduced to something like reflection, is alternately railing at and reasoning with the priest, Prince Haco, who amidst the attack on Beregon had seen a stir in his part of the encampment, flies thither in alarm; and seeing how matters stand, he dashes into the pile already beginning to blaze, and carries off his beloved and her companions to a place of safety, all being done so quickly that the priests can neither guess at the actors, nor whither the victims have vanished. While the lovers are thus removed beyond the turmoil, Beregon is stormed and occupied by the Norwegians.

A truce now succeeds for the purpose of burying the dead; and those trials of skill and strength which were wont to grace the funerals of a warlike age are proclaimed on the occasion, at which both Scots and Norwegians are to contend. After the competitions of spear-throwing and running, that of throwing the mace from the foot is the trial, a game to which the Scots were unaccustomed; and such was the might and skill of Eric in this pastime that none could compete with him. At length, a young giantly peasant rushes into the lists, and instead of a mace, which he could not poise upon his foot, substitutes a clod, which he sends far beyond the mark of the king, who swears that this is no mere mortal, but the demon Lok himself. The next contest is a boat-race, each boat having seven men, except one, which has only three; but when Eric's barge, as it was wont, had distanced every competitor, it is neared, overtaken, and outstripped by the boat of the three men, one of whom wields such a tremendous pair of oars, and with such superhuman strength, that the king again recognizes him as his dreaded rival Lok, and trembles at the rivalry. The last trial, after several other competitions, is one of wrestling, and the prize a Roman sword and coat of mail. Pair by pair Norseman and Scot encounter, until at the end only two champions remain—but of these the one is Eric, and the other that dreaded youth to whom he had twice succumbed. The two engage, while the rival nations look on with breathless interest; but the king, hitherto unmatched by mortal strength, is foiled with ease by the other, who is a third time proclaimed victor. It will of course be perceived that this young conqueror who comes in several disguises, and always vanishes in mystery and reappears with double terrors, is no other than the wild savage who bore Columba safely through the storm, and brought him and his crew to land.

Eric is now in sore tribulation. The rich sacrifice with which Odin was to be appeased had been snatched from the altar. He has been thrice overcome by one who, if not a mere peasant, can be no other than the prince of darkness himself—a dilemma of which neither horn is very gratifying. Even the armour also which he had staked as the prize of wrestling, in the confidence that none could match him, was a charmed and consecrated panoply, the loss of which boded his own downfall, and the extinction of his time-honoured dynasty. These are omens from which he is impatient to escape by hurrying into the last trial of all. The day of combat arrives, and he enters the lists with his two champions; but even up to the last hour the Scots have been unable to muster their full complement for the encounter, a third hero being still wanting. At this dead lock, every reader of poetry or novels can easily guess the solution, and raise the exulting "See the conquering hero comes," on the sudden entrance of a youth arrayed in Roman armour. After a terrible encounter, Eric falls beneath the blows of his strange antagonist, while his two aids are easily overcome by the two Scottish champions to whom they are opposed. And now that the victor has so fully proved himself the bravest man in Scotland, nothing remains but that Hynde should accept him for her husband, and transfer the sceptre to his hand—and this she does the more readily, when she finds that he is none other than Prince Eiden himself, her own cousin, and the rightful heir of the throne.

The arrival of Saint Columba in Ireland had awoke all his national feelings, so that in spite of the prohibitions of his grandfather, he had fled from Ireland in disguise, and appeared upon the scene when his presence was most needed. But his work is not yet quite ended, for the Norwegians, impatient to revenge the death of their king, and having still the superiority, turn suddenly upon the Scots, and might have exterminated them, but for the opportune arrival of Colmar, king of Ireland, who comes at the head of ten thousand brave soldiers, in search of his runaway grandson. The united army of Scots and Irish soon defeat the Norwegians, and Colmar having fallen in the engagement, the crown of Ireland as well as that of Scotland devolves upon the fortunate Eiden. As for wicked Wene, her eccentric love of Haco and devotedness to her mistress are not allowed to pass unrewarded, for her husband succeeds to the throne of Norway, and she becomes a queen in reality, and reigns to her heart's contentment.

Such, amidst its manifold transitions and digressions, is the tale of "Queen Hynde;" and we trust that this brief analysis, instead of abating the interest of the reader, will enable him to follow out the narrative with greater facility, and all the more justly to appreciate its merits. It is the largest and most complicated, but by no means the least meritorious of the Ettrick Shepherd's poetical productions, the beauties of which will well repay a careful and patient perusal.

QUEEN HYNDE.

PART FIRST.

THERE was a time— but it is gone!—
When he that sat on Albyn's throne,
Over his kindred Scots alone
Upheld a father's sway;
Unmix'd and unalloy'd they stood
With plodding Pict of Cimbrian brood,
Or sullen Saxon's pamper'd blood,
Their bane on future day.
Nations arose, and nations fell,
But still his sacred citadel
Of Grampian cliff and trackless dell
The Caledonian held:
Grim as the wolf that guards his young,
Above the dark defile he hung,
With targe and claymore forward flung;
The stoutest heart, the proudest tongue,
Of foeman there was quell'd.
The plumed chief, the plaided clan,
Mock'd at the might of mortal man;
Even those the world who overran
Were from that bourn expell'd.
Then stood the Scot unmoved and free,
Wall'd by his hills and sounding sea:
Child of the ocean and the wood,
The frith, the forest, gave him food;
His couch the heath on summer even,
His coverlet the cloud of heaven,
While from the winter wind and sleet
The bothy was a shelter meet.
His home was in the desert rude,
His range the mountain solitude;
The sward beneath the forest tree
His revel hall, his sanctuary;
His court of equity and right,
His tabernacle, was the height
The field of fame his death-bed stern,
His cemetery the lonely cairn.

Such was the age, and such the day,
When young Queen Hynde, with gentle sway,
Ruled o'er a people bold and free,
From vale of Clyde to Oready.
The tale is old, but the event
Confirm'd by dreadful monument.
Her sire had eastern vales laid waste,
The Pict subdued, the Saxon chased,
And dying old and loved, resign'd
The sceptre to his lovely Hynde.

Each warrior chief of name was there,
Each bard, and gray-hair'd minister,
When the old king, in accents mild,
Commended to their love his child.

"My friends, your faith has oft been seal'd,
In counsel tried, and bloody field;
For Scotland's right, by foes o'errun,
We pledged our lives—we fought and won;
Now every Scot can wander free
From hill to hill, from sea to sea.
Thanks to your worth—the throne is fast.
Now list my suit;—it is the last.

"One child I have, and one alone,
To fill my father's ancient throne;
Your virgin sovereign you behold—
I speak not of her beauteous mould,

But, if affection do not blind,
I vouch her energy of mind;
Here pledge your honours still to be
To her what you have been to me."

Each warrior vow'd upon his brand,
And, kneeling, kiss'd the maiden's hand;
Each gray-hair'd sire, with moisten'd eye,
Swore by his country's liberty.

The king then rose upon his bed,
And leaning forward, bent his head;
His silver locks waved o'er his cheek,
Like winter clouds on mountain bleak;
And like that mountain's hoary form,
All blench'd and withered by the storm,
Was every feature's grisly cast,
Pale, but majestic to the last.

"Grieve not, my gallant friends," he said,
"That by a queen the land is sway'd;
When woman rules without control,
Her generous but dependent soul
To worth and wisdom gives command—
And then 'tis man that rules the land.

"But when in second place she sits,
Then all her cunning, all her wits,
Are on the stretch with knaves to league
And rule the king by court intrigue.
Trust me, 'tis truth to you I tell—
I have been tried, and know it well!—
A queen by men of wisdom rules,
A king by mistresses and fools.

"Now note my will: My daughter, Hynde,
Must wed the knight that suits her mind;
Her choice no interest let revoke;
Be it as free as bird on oak,
Or the gray eagle of the rock.
But suffer not, on any plea,
A lover to her privacy;
No breathings of ecstatic bliss,
No fond caress, or burning kiss,
May be allow'd, else all is done—
By coxcomb is the lady won,
And Albyn's ancient royal blood
Run to a weak and spurious brood.
Forbid it, God!—In time to be,
Should my embodied spirit see
A son of mine himself betake
To sloth while warriors toil and wake:
On such my soul shall never tend,
As guardian angel or as friend!

"These woes and failings to prevent,
Let young Queen Hynde, in royal tent,
Hear chiefs debate on government;
Mark all their feats in bold tournay,
And list their love or warrior lay;
And thus, her keen and piercing sight
Can hardly fail to judge aright.

"Think of this charge—much it portends;
I go, but not resign my friends;
No home I'll seek within the sky:
My patriot soul shall hover nigh,
To watch your actions, mark your deeds
In battle-field, where glory leads;
And o'er the counsel group, reclined
Upon the eddy of the wind,
I'll list how truth your counsel brooks,
And read your spirits in your looks.

"Woe be to him whom I observe
Daring from loyalty to swerve!
Though neither blood nor bone invest
The living flame within this breast,
That flame shall sear his palsied sight,
With shades of horror strew the night,
Load with disgust the light of day,
His motions cross, his path belay;
Each warden spirit's arm control,
And whisper vengeance to his soul,
Till down the miscreant shall be driven—
The hate of man, the scorn of heaven!

"Be thou, my child, upright as fair,
And thou shalt be my special care;
And oh! should power's temptations try,
Think of thy father's spirit nigh:
Be that thy stay on ruin's brink;
Nor tongue may frame, nor heart may think
How distant far such crime will spurn
The kindred minds that round thee burn.

"I may not warn thee face to face;
But still, when danger or disgrace
Unseen approaches, I'll be nigh;
Therefore, my child, on dreams rely.
Then to thy spirit's eye unfurl'd,
I'll hold, in shadowy courses hurl'd,
The motions of the moving world.
Farewell—be calm; my time is nigh;
Would that the parting throe were by!"

He stretch'd him on his couch, resign'd
The ruthless foe of human kind,
Whom he had met mid fire and storm,
And braved in every hideous form,
Now unresisting found his arm,
And stopp'd the tide that scarce was warm.

No plaint—no groan hung on his breath,
To gratify the ear of death;
Steady and dauntless was his look,
As one a bitter draught who took,
Or, for the sake of health to be,
Suffer'd a transient agony:
On that pale face, when turn'd to clay,
When lifeless on the couch he lay,
A bold defiance still was blent,
Uncancell'd, with each lineament.

The cross was o'er the body hung,
The royal coronach was sung,

And paid each rite, each honour due,
To sire beloved and sovereign true;
And young Queen Hynde holds the command
O'er Caledon's unconquer'd land.

High were the hopes her chiefs among,
Their emulation great and strong;
Before their queen in circle set.
When for deliberate counsel met,
Never was heard such manly sense,
Such high and moving eloquence;
Never did armed list present
Such bold and rapid tournament;
And when the festal days came on,
Such gallant splendour never shone
In royal halls of Caledon.

Then did the towers with echoes ring,
For every knight his song would sing,
Whether his voice to music's tone
Had note of harmony or none;
And, strange though seems the incident,
Those who sang worst were most intent.

No smile, no marvel let arise,
That such the strife, when such the prize—
A flower in Albyn never shone
Like Hynde, the Queen of Caledon.

The Lord of Moray, famed in war,
Proud Gaul of Ross, and lordly Mar,
Were first in rank and wide control,
And others shrunk before their scowl.
Young Allan Bane was brave and bold,
And Sutherland of manly mould;
And Donald Gorm, of lion eye,
Chief of the kindred tribes of Skye,
Was such a knight in heart and mien
As Skye again hath never seen.
Yet, after year and day was past,
It was not trow'd, from glances cast,
Who would be chosen king at last.

Once on a day—a day it seem'd,
When more than earthly splendour beam'd
On Appin hills, that tower'd on high,
Like golden columns to the sky,
Bathed in the glories of the morn,
That, west in airy rivers borne,
Stream'd over all the woods of Lorn—
Queen Hynde upon the mountain leant;
She wist not how or why she went;
But there she sat, by old gray stone,
Upon the flowery sward alone.
The day-breeze play'd in eddies weak,
And waved the rock-rose to her cheek;
The little ewe-flower starr'd the lea,
The hare-bell nodded at her knee,
While all the sward in summer prime
Was woven with the moorland thyme.

Blythe was her bosom's guileless core,
Unthoughtful all of woes before;
With nature's beauties glow'd her mind;
She breathed a prayer for all mankind,
Pondering of nought but onward bliss,
And peace, and love, and happiness.

How transient all we here enjoy!
How short our bliss without alloy!
While thus she lay, with heart elate,
In nature's purest blissful state,
She heard a voice rise from the ground,
With hollow, soft, and moving sound;
Fix'd was her eye, and mute her tongue,
While thus some viewless being sung:—

Song.

"The black bull of Norway has broken his band—
He's down through the links of fair Scotland;
And the flower of the isle shall be lost and won,
Ere ever he turn his horn from the sun."

She look'd around with eyes intent,
In breathless dumb astonishment;
No living thing she could espy,
Yet still a sound was murmur'd nigh!
It sunk into a mournful tone,
And flitted like a passing groan.

She deem'd she lay on fairy ground,
By some unearthly fetters bound;
For why she came so far astray,
Or why she did not haste away,
She nothing knew. The east grew dun,
A cloud came floating o'er the sun,
And down the hills of Appin roll'd
In many a dim and darksome fold;
The scene was mingled—shades of night
With dim, with pale, and dazzling light.

Still was the mighty ocean seen,
A boundless field of dazzling sheen;
For west the morning beam withdrew
To bask upon the shelvy blue,
And on its bosom went and came
In thousand shreds of shivery flame.

But oh, between the east and north
Came moving on a veil so swarth—
From earth to heaven one solid wave,
Like pall upon creation's grave—
As if the Lord of Nature furl'd
Up like a scroll the smouldering world.

The virgin sovereign look'd aghast,
And ween'd each breath would be her last;
For denser grew the vapour's coil,
And backward seem'd to whirl and boil;
At length stood fix'd, from earth to sky,
A wall of gloomy ebony;
Save when long wreaths of downy gray
Turn'd their pale bosoms to the day,
Like fillets of empyrean white
Circling the funeral brow of night.

It seem'd as if the world from thence
Was sever'd by Omnipotence—
One part in light and life to bloom,
The other grope in murky gloom:
As all behind were left in wrath,
A gloomy wilderness of death,
And all before to joy for aye
In starry night and sunshine day.

Conscious of innocence the while,
The queen look'd on that hideous veil
With awe, but yet with such an eye
As virtue turns unto the sky;
Expecting, every glance she cast,
To see forth bursting from its breast
The hail, the thunder, or the flame,
Or something without form or name.

The virgin look'd not long in vain—
The cloud began to move amain;
Inward, like whirlpool of the ocean,
It roll'd with dark and troubled motion;
And sometimes, like that ocean's foam,
Waving on its unstable home,
The silvery verges tossing by
Were swallow'd in obscurity.

Still, as it open'd on the sight,
The gauzy linings met the light;
And far within its bosom grew
A human form of face she knew.
No earthly thought it did convey,
It was not form'd like face of clay,
But in the cloudy dome was seen
Like image of a thing had been—
As if on canvas heavenly fair
A reverend face was form'd of air,
On texture of celestial land,
And pencill'd by an angel's hand;
Yet every line was there approved,
And every feature once beloved.

The silence, as she gazed, was broke—
Aloud the hoary vision spoke;
But yet no motion it address'd;
Lip unto lip was never press'd;
It moved no feature, tongue nor eye,
Yet this it utter'd solemnly:—

"Queen of green Albyn, liest thou alone?
Look to thy honour, and look to thy throne!
The ravisher comes on his car of the wind;
The sea is before thee, the spoiler behind.
Queen of green Albyn, dare not to roam!
There's rapine approaching, and treason at home.
Trust not the sea-maid with laurel in hand;
Trust not the leopard, or woe to the land.
The falcon shall fail, and the oak of Loch-Orn,
The eagle of Mar, and the lion of Lorn;
But trust to the roe-buck with antler of gray,
In the halls of Temora, or woe to the day!"

Up closed the cloud dark as before,
But chilling terror was not o'er:
Just where the maiden's eye was set,
Where cloud, and land, and ocean met,
A bull came forth, of monstrous frame,
With wreathy mane and eyes of flame;
Slowly he paw'd the yielding ground,
Then stood and madly gazed around,
His white horns flickering in the light,
Like boreal streamers o'er the night.

Soon as he fix'd his savage look
On young Queen Hynde, the mountains shook
With bellowings of unearthly tone,
As wild and furious he came on.
She tried to fly—her sight grew dim,
A numbness seized on every limb,
And nought remain'd in such a place
Save meeting danger face to face;
For she had heard that maiden's eye
Had some commanding majesty,
At which, if bold and fearless cast,
All earthly things would stand aghast.
Other expedient there was none;
Mighty the motive! All alone
She turn'd, and with as dauntless look
As eye of beauty well might brook,
Beheld the monster as he came
Roaring and foaming on his aim.

He eyed her moveless as she stood,
And all at once, in raving mood,
Halted abash'd, and 'gan aloof
To tear the ground with horn and hoof,
Uttering such horrid sounds of wrath,
As hell had bellow'd from beneath.
The mountains caught the clamours loud,
And groan'd in echoes from the cloud.

Proud of her virtue's power display'd,
And homage by creation paid,
High glow'd the beauties kindly given
As maiden's shield by favouring Heaven;
So strong the fence, that savage fierce
Was balk'd, and could not through it pierce.
But, mad at such a viewless toil,
He kneel'd, he grovell'd in the soil:
Shorten'd by fury, broke his roar,
Not in long bellow as before,
But with loud rending bursts of breath
He vomited forth smoke and wrath.

I've heard it said by reverend sage—
And why should youth discredit age?—
That maiden's form, when pure and free,
Had something of divinity;
That furious ban-dog changed his eye,
And fawn'd and whined as she drew nigh;
That elfin spear, or serpent's sting,
Or pestilence on mortal wing,
To her was harmless as the dew;
That crocodile and lion knew

The virgin frame, which had a charm
They would not, or they could not harm;
That even the thunderbolt of heaven,
Pour'd in resistless liquid levin,
Would turn aside before her eye,
Or part, and fleet unhurtful by;
Because she form'd, in nature's reign,
That link of the eternal chain
Which earth unto the heavens combined,
And angels join'd to human kind.
From worth this adage I received;
I love it, and in part believe't.

Well might Queen Hynde have stood unmoved,
Trusting a power so fairly proved,
For o'er her memory stealing came
That old and wondrous apothegm;
And she had stood, save for the eye
Of virgin's only enemy.

Across the hill, swift as the deer,
Fierce Mar approach'd, with shield and spear,
To save his beauteous sovereign bent,
And claim the due acknowledgment:
Aloud his threat and clamour grew,
Daring the savage as he flew.

Soon as the monster saw advance
The chieftain with his threatening lance,
Away he rush'd in vengeance dire,
And met him with redoubled ire.
The chieftain bawl'd and braved amain
To cow the savage, but in vain;
Onward he drove with stayless shock:
The rested lance in splinters broke,
And down to earth the chief was borne,
Struggling to ward the ruthless horn;
But all in vain!—Queen Hynde beheld
Him gored and toss'd along the field;
She saw him swathed in bloody red,
And torfell'd[1] on the monster's head.

Appall'd and shock'd, her faith withdrew:
She turn'd, and off in horror flew;
But soon all hopes of life resign'd
As the loud bellowings near'd behind.
Upon a rough and rocky steep,
That overhangs the restless deep,
She was o'erhied, and toss'd in air—
Loud were her shrieks of wild despair:
Oh for the covert of the grave!
No refuge!—none at hand to save!

Maids of Dunedin, in despair
Will ye not weep and rend your hair?
Ye who, in these o'erpolished times,
Can shed the tears o'er woeful rhymes,
O'er plot of novel sore repine,
And cry for hapless heroine—
Oh ye dear maids, of forms so fair,
That scarce the wandering western air
May kiss the breast so sweetly slim,
Or mould the drapery on the limb;
If in such breast a heart may be,
Sure you must weep and wail with me!

That full set eye, that peachen chin,
Bespeaks the comely void within;
But sure that vacancy is blent
With fuming, flaming sentiment!
Then can you read, ye maidens fair,
And neither weep nor rend your hair?

Think of a lady all alone—
The beauteous Hynde of Caledon—
Toss'd up in air a hideous height,
On point of blood-stain'd horn to light;
And if to wail thou can'st delay,
Have thou a bard's anathema!

Still is there one resource in view—
For life one effort still is due—
It is, to plunge with desperate leap
Into the far-resounding deep,
And in the pure and yielding wave
To seek a refuge or a grave.

The leap is made, the monster foil'd,
Adown the air the virgin toil'd,
But in cold tremor crept her blood,
For far short of the yielding flood
Her fall descends with deathful blow
Sheer on the pointed rocks below.

Oh can'st thou view the scene with me,
The scene of ruth and misery?
Yes; thou shalt go, and thou shalt view
Such scene as artist never drew.

In western lands there is a hall,
With spire, and tower, and turret tall;
And in that tower a chamber fair:
Is that a mortal triad there?
For sure such beauty, such array,
Such moveless eye of wild dismay,
Such attitude, was never given
To being underneath the heaven.
Yes, there are two most fair, I ween,
But she whom they support between,
In symmetry and form of face,
In comely yet majestic grace,
Statue, or vision she would seem
Chose from celestial cherubim!

Come, modellist, thy toil renew—
Such scene shall never meet thy view!
See how the raven tresses flow,
And lace that mould of purest snow;
The night-robe from one shoulder flung,
In silken folds so careless hung;
The face half-turn'd, the eagle eye
Fix'd rayless on the morning sky;

[1] *To torfel*, to toss, to overpower; also, to roll over, to struggle with an overpowering force.

That neck—that bosom, ill at rest,
White as the sea-mew's downy breast,
And that pure lip was ne'er outdone
By rose-leaf folding to the sun.

And note that still and steadfast eye,
That look of wild sublimity,
As dawning memory wakes, the while
Soft fading to a virgin smile.
O modellist! thy toil renew—
Such scene shall never greet thy view.

High looks that chamber o'er the sea,
And frith, and vale, and promont'ry;
From dark Cruachan pours the day,
The lattice drinks the golden ray;
And that fair form you there behold,
That statue of majestic mould,
Leaning two beauteous maids upon,
Is Hynde, the Queen of Caledon.
The leap was from a couch of down;
The rest, a dream for ever flown!

Maid of Dunedin, do not jeer,
Nor lift that eye with gibing fleer;
For well you wot, deny who dares,
Such are the most of woman's cares;
Nay, if I durst, I would them deem
More trivial than a morning dream.
Have I not seen thy deep distress,
Thy tears for disregarded dress,
Thy flush of pride, thy wrath intense,
For slight and casual precedence?
And I have heard thy tongue confess
Most high offence and bitterness.
Yet sooth thou still art dear to me—
These very faults I love for thee;
Then why not all my freaks allow?
I have a few, and so hast thou.

It was a dream—but it was one,
The more the virgin ponder'd on,
The deeper on her heart it fell,
Her sire's last words remembering well:—
"When danger threatens, I'll be nigh;
Therefore, my child, on dreams rely."
And she believed each incident
Was by her father's spirit sent,
To warn of treason or of blood,
Or danger all misunderstood.

A load upon her heart it weigh'd,
And on her youthful spirits prey'd;
At length she left her royal pile,
To visit, and consult the while
Columba of the holy isle:
A seer and priest of God was he,
A saint of spotless purity;
And then held in such high regard,
That Scottish sovereign nothing dared,
Of war, religion, or of law,
Without consulting Columba.

Queen Hynde embarks in Uan bay,
Brisk was the breeze and bright the day;
Before the tide, before the gale,
The gilded barge, with silken sail,
Adown the narrow channel run,
Like meteor in the morning sun.
So swiftly swept the flying keel,
The woods and islands seem'd to wheel;
And distant peaks of freckly gray
Were winding to the north away.

The sea-gull rose as she drew nigh,
And tried before her speed to fly;
But after toilsome travelling,
With beating breast and flapping wing,
Was forced to turn aside, outworn,
For shelter in the creeks of Lorn.

But Ila Glas, the minstrel gray,
Well noted, as they sped away,
That sea-fowls flock'd from isle and steep,
To view that wonder of the deep;
And well they might, for never more
Such bark shall glide from Scotland's shore.

The sailors were as chiefs bedight,
The queen and virgins all in white;
The prow was form'd in curious mould,
The top-mast stem of beaten gold;
The sails were white, the sails were blue,
And every dye the rainbow knew;
And then the pennons, red and pale,
So far were fluttering in the gale,
She was not like an earthly thing,
But some sweet meteor on the wing.
I may not say (and if I might,
Man never has beheld the sight),
That all were like pure angels driven
By living breeze in barge of heaven.

When westward from the sound she fell,
She met the ocean's mighty swell;
Yet bounded on in all her pride,
Breasting the billow's mountain side,
Or bearing with delirious sweep
From dizzy verge into the deep.

Maid of Dunedin, well I know,
Had'st thou been there, there had been woe!
Distress of body and of mind,
And qualms of most discourteous kind.
But here, in days of yore, were seen
Young Hynde, the Caledonian queen,
With all her maids, enjoy the motion,
Blithe as the bird that skims the ocean.
Oh to have been the soaring gull,
Perch'd on the headland cliff of Mull,
There to have watch'd, with raptured eye,
That royal bark go bounding by,
Casting a tiny rainbow shade
O'er every hill the ocean made!

Iona bay is gained at last—
The barge is moor'd, the anchor cast;

And though no woman might come nigh
That consecrated land of I,
The queen, presuming on her sway,
Went right ashore without delay.
Her sire that isle had gifted free,
And rear'd that sacred monast'ry;
The doctrine of the cross he heard,
Believed, and paid it high regard;
For he perceived that simple plan
A band 'twixt God and sinful man,
Befitting well his nature weak,
That would not loose, and could not break;
And with his child and kinsmen came,
And was baptized in Jesus' name.

When Ila Glas, in holy fane,
Announced his queen and virgin train,
Saint Oran was that very time
Giving such picture of the crime
Of woman's love and woman's art,
Of woman's mind and woman's heart—
If thou dear maid, the same hadst heard,
Thy blissful views had all been marr'd;
For thou durst never more have been
In robe of lightsome texture seen,
Thy breast, soft-heaving with the sigh,
Arresting glance of vagrant eye:
Love's fatal and exhaustless quiver
Must have been shrouded up for ever.
The perfume—simper—look askance—
The ready blush—the ogling glance,
All, all o'erthrown, ne'er to recover.
Thy conquests and thy triumphs over,—
Oh breathe to heaven the grateful vow,
That good Saint Oran lives not now!

When he of such intrusion heard,
Around in holy wrath he stared:—
"What!" said the saint—"What! even here
Must these unrighteous pests appear?
Though even the rough surrounding sea
Could not protect our sanctuary;
Nor maiden modesty, nor pride,
Can keep them from where men reside;
I should have ween'd that, thus retired,
The frame of mind the place required,
The frame of holy penitence,
Had been enough to keep them hence.

"I know them well, and much I fear
No good intent has brought them here.
E'er since that day, deplored the most,
When Adam sinn'd, and man was lost,
By woman tempted to the deed.
Mischief to man has been their meed.
Rise, holy brethren, rise with me,
And drive them back into the sea!
Should they resist, do them no harm,
But bear them back by force of arm."

Up sprung the bearded group amain,
Who to be first each nerve they strain;
Whether to save the holy isle
From woman's snare and witching wile,
Or once again to fold the charms
Of beauty in their idle arms,
I nothing wot; but all was vain,
For, in the chancel of the fane,
Columba rose before the band,
With crosier stretch'd in his right hand.—
"Hold, my loved brethren—is it best
Thus to expel a royal guest?
We not as woman her receive,
But Scotland's representative;
And meet it is that maids should be
Tending on virgin royalty."

That word was law—the rage was o'er,
The stern Saint Oran said no more:
He down sat on his chair of stone,
Shook his gray head, and gave a groan.

Come view the barefoot group with me,
Kneeling upon one bended knee,
In two long files—a lane between,
Where passed the maidens and their queen,
Up to the sacred altar stone,
Where good Columba stands alone.

There was one maiden of the train
Known by the name of wicked Wene;
A lovely thing, of slender make,
Who mischief wrought for mischief's sake;
And never was her heart so pleased
As when a man she vex'd or teazed.
By few at court she was approved,
And yet by all too well beloved;
So dark, so powerful was her eye,
Her mien so witching and so sly,
That every youth as she inclined,
Was mortified, reserved, or kind;
This day would curse her in disdain,
And next would sigh for wicked Wene.

No sooner had this fairy eyed
The looks demure on either side,
Than all her spirits 'gan to play
With keen desire to work deray.
Whene'er a face she could espy
Of more than meet solemnity,
Then would she tramp his crumpled toes,
Or, with sharp fillip on the nose,
Make the poor brother start and stare,
With watery eyes and bristling hair.
And yet this wayward elf the while
Inflicted all with such a smile,
That every monk, for all his pain,
Look'd as he wish'd it done again.

Saint Oran scarce the coil could brook;
With holy anger glow'd his look;
But, judging still the imp would cease,
He knit his brows, and held his peace.

At length the little demon strode
Up to a huge dark man of God;
Her soft hand on his temple laid,
To feel how fair his pulses play'd;
Then by the beard his face she raised,
And on the astonished bedesman gazed
With such enchantment, such address,
Such sly, insidious wickedness,
That, spite of insult and amaze,
Softer and softer wax'd his gaze,
Till all his stupid face was blent
With smile of awkward languishment.

Saint Oran saw—in trumpet tone,
He cried—"Satan, avoid!—begone!
Hence!—all away! for, by the rood,
Ye're fiends in form of flesh and blood!"—
Columba beckoned; all was still.
Hynde knew the mover of the ill,
And, instant turning, looked for Wene:
"I told thee, girl, and tell again,
For once remember where thou art,
And be due reverence thy part."

Low bow'd the imp with seemly grace,
And humbly show'd to acquiesce;
But mischief on that lip did lie,
And sly dissemblage in the eye.
Scarce had her mistress ceased to speak,
When form'd the dimple on her cheek,
And her keen glance did well bewray
Who next should fall the jackal's prey.
Saint Oran, woe be to the time
She mark'd thy purity sublime!
Oh! never was her heart so fain—
'Twas a new fund for wicked Wene.

Meantime the queen most courteously
Address'd the seer and priest of I;
And told her latent fears at large,
Her aged father's dying charge,
And finally, with earnest mien,
Of the late vision she had seen;
And that for counsel she had come
Thus on a pilgrimage from home.

"Yet, reverend sires—the truth to say,
Though I have pondered night and day
On this strange vision—yet so toss'd
Hath been my mind, that much is lost,
And now I only can present
You with its startling lineament."

"Oh!" cried Saint Oran—"here, forsooth,
Is sample fair of woman's truth!
Here she pretends to ask her lot
From dream, yet owns that dream forgot!
Out on ye all!—your whole intent
Is on some devilish purpose bent!"

The queen was utterly astounded;
Even Saint Columba was confounded
At such outrageous frowardness;
The real cause they did not guess.

Ere that time, Wene, full silently,
Had slid up to Saint Oran's knee,
And ogled him with look so bland
That all his efforts could not stand;
Such language hung on every glance;
Such sweet provoking impudence.

At first he tried with look severe
That silent eloquence to sear,
But little ween'd the fairy's skill;
He tried what was impossible.
His flush of wrath, and glance unkind,
Were anodynes unto her mind.
Then she would look demure, and sigh,
And sink in graceful courtesy;
Press both her hands on her fair breast,
And look what could not be exprest:
When o'er his frame her glance would stray,
He wist not what to do or say.
No one perceived the elf's despight,
Nor good Saint Oran's awkward plight.
So quick the motion of her eye,
All things at once she seem'd to spy;
For Hynde, who loved her, wont to say,
For all her freaks by night and day,
Though mischief was her hourly meed,
She ne'er could catch her in the deed.
So instantly she wrought the harm,
Then, as by momentary charm,
Stood all composed, with simplest grace,
With look demure and thoughtful face,
As if unconscious of offence,
The statue of meek innocence!
Of Oran's wrath none saw the root,
The queen went on and all were mute.

"Now, sires, to you I have appeal'd,
To know what's nature, what reveal'd;
And that you may discern aright,
I'll tell you how I pass'd the night;
What feelings on my fancy crept,
And all my thoughts before I slept."

"Now, for the Virgin's sake, I pray,
Spare the recital if you may!"
Cried Oran, with distemper'd mien,
And stretch'd his hands forth to the queen:
"My liege, whate'er the train denotes,
Oh spare the feelings and the thoughts!
We know them well—too well foresee
Their tenor and their tendency.
Heavens! how we're bearded and belay'd:
Would that the dream itself were said!"

Columba poignantly reproved
The rudeness of the man he loved;
Though all were shock'd at what he said,
None saw how the poor priest was bay'd.
O Wene! for many a wild uproar,
Much, much hast thou to answer for!

Scarce had the queen again begun,
When something Wene had look'd or done
Enraged the saint to such excess,
He cried with desperate bitterness,
"Avoid thee, Satan!—off!—away!
Thou piece of demon-painted clay!
Thy arts are vain! thy efforts lost!"—
All look'd astounded, Wene the most,
So sad—so sweet—so innocent,
That all supposed the queen was meant.
Between the fathers strife arose,
And words were like to end in blows.

"Sooth!" said Saint Oran, "is it fit,
That you or I should calmly sit,
Listening to tale of which the theme
Is woman's thought and woman's dream?
Out on them all!"—And forth he strode,
Groaning as one beneath a load;
And muttering words they heard not well,
Of limbs of Satan, sin, and hell!
Straight to his little cell he wended,
Where loud th' impassioned prayer ascended:
Peace was restored, and Wene was left
Of every cue to ill bereft.

Columba listen'd to the queen
With deep regard and troubled mien;
And conscious many dreams were sent
By spirits kind and provident,
The more he thought and ponder'd o'er
That wondrous vision, still the more
He was confirm'd it did portend
Some evil wisdom might forfend;
And he resolved to journey straight
Home with the queen th' event to wait,
For well he knew the Christian cause
Rested on Scotland's throne and laws.

The vow was seal'd, the host display'd,
The hymn was sung, the mass was said,
And after gifts of value high,
The royal Hynde withdrew from I.
Columba went her guide to be,
In rule, in truth, and purity.

They halted on the shore a while,
And ere they left the sacred isle,
Oran, with holy garments on,
Bestow'd on each his benison.
Yet all with half an eye could see
He deem'd it nought did signify;
He seem'd as if with heaven he strove,
And more in anger than in love.

Scarce had he said the word, *Amen*,
When petulant and posterous Wene
Kneel'd on the sand and clasp'd his knee,
And thus address'd her earnest plea:—

"Oh, holy sire! be it my meed
With thee a heavenly life to lead;
Here do I crave to sojourn still,
A nun, or abbess, which you will;
For much I long to taste with thee
A life of peace and purity.
Nay, think not me to drive away,
For here I am, and here I'll stay,
To teach my sex the right to scan,
And point the path of truth to man."

"The path of truth!" Saint Oran cried,
His mouth and eyes distended wide;
It was not said, it was not spoke,
'Twas like a groan from prison broke,
With such a burst of rushing breath,
As if the pure and holy faith
Had, by that maiden's fond intent,
Been wholly by the roots uprent.
"The path of truth!—O God of heaven,
Be my indignant oath forgiven!
For, by thy vales of light I swear,
And all the saints that sojourn there,
If ever again a female eye,
That pole-star of iniquity,
Shed its dire influence through our fane,
In it no longer I remain.

"Were God for trial here to throw
Man's ruthless and eternal Foe,
And ask with which I would contend,
I'd drive thee hence, and take the fiend!
The devil man may hold at bay,
With book, and bead, and holy lay;
But from the snare of woman's wile,
Her breath, and sin-uplifted smile,
No power of man may 'scape that gin;
His foe is in the soul within.

"Oh! if beside the walks of men,
In greenwood glade and mountain glen,
Rise weeds so fair to look upon,
Woe to the land of Caledon!
Its strength shall waste, its vitals burn,
And all its honours overturn.
Go, get thee from our coast away,
Thou floweret of a scorching day!
Thou art, if mien not thee belies,
A demon in an angel's guise."

"Angels indeed!" said Lauchlan Dhu,
As from the strand the boat withdrew.
Lauchlan was he whom Wene address'd,
Whose temple her soft hand had press'd,
Whose beard she caught with flippant grace,
And smiled upon his sluggish face.
A burning sigh his bosom drew;
"Angels indeed!" said Lauchlan Dhu.

"Lauchlan," the father cried with heat,
"Thou art a man of thoughts unmeet!
For that same sigh, and utterance too,
Thou shalt a grievous penance do.
Angels, forsooth!—O God, I pray,
Such blooming angels keep away!"

Lauchlan turned round in seeming pain,
Look'd up to heaven, and sigh'd again.

From that time forth, it doth appear
Saint Oran's penance was severe;
He fasted, pray'd, and wept outright,
Slept on the cold stone all the night;
And then, as if for error gross,
He caused them bind him to the cross,
Unclothe his back, and, man by man,
To lash him till the red blood ran.
But then—or yet in after time,
No one could ever learn his crime;
Each keen inquiry proved in vain,
Though all supposed he dream'd of Wene.
Alas, what woes her mischief drew
On Oran and on Lauchlan Dhu!

Sweet maiden, I thy verdict claim;
Was not Saint Oran sore to blame
For so inflicting pains condign?
Oh think, if such a doom were thine!
Of thy day-thoughts I nothing know,
Nor of thy dreams—and were it so,
They would but speak thy guileless core,
And I should love thee still the more.
But ah! if I were scourged to be
For every time I dream of thee,
Full hardly would thy poet thrive;
Harsh is his song that's flay'd alive!
Then let us breathe the grateful vow,
That stern Saint Oran lives not now.

The sun went down, the bark went slow,
The tide was high, the wind was low;
And ere they won the Sound of Mull,
The beauteous group grew mute and dull.
Silent they lean'd against the prow,
And heard the gurgling waves below,
Playing so near with chuckling freak,
They almost ween'd it wet the cheek:
One single inch 'twixt them and death,
They wonder'd at their cordial faith!

During this silent, eiry dream,
This tedious toiling with the stream,
Old Ila Glas his harp-strings rung,
With hand elate, and puled and sung
A direful tale of woe and weir,
Of bold unearthly mountaineer;
A lay full tiresome, stale, and bare,
As most of northern ditties are:
I learn'd it from a bard of Mull,
Who deem'd it high and wonderful;
'Tis poor and vacant as the man;
I scorn to sing it though I can.

Maid of Dunedin, thou may'st see,
Though long I strove to pleasure thee,
That now I've changed my timid tone,
And sing to please myself alone;
And thou wilt read when, well I wot,
I care not whether you do or not.

Yes, I'll be querulous or boon,
Flow with the tide, change with the moon;
For what am I, or what art thou,
Or what the cloud and radiant bow,
Or what are waters, winds, and seas,
But elemental energies?
The sea must flow, the cloud descend,
The thunder burst, the rainbow bend,
Not when they would but when they can,
Fit emblems of the soul of man!
Then let me frolic while I may,
The sportive vagrant of a day;
Yield to the impulse of the time,
Be it a toy, or theme sublime;
Wing the thin air or starry sheen;
Sport with the child upon the green;
Dive to the sea-maid's coral dome,
Or fairy's visionary home;
Sail on the whirlwind or the storm,
Or trifle with the maiden's form;
Or raise up spirits of the hill,
But only if, and when I will.

Say, may the meteor of the wild,
Nature's unstaid, erratic child,
That glimmers o'er the forest fen,
Or twinkles in the darksome glen,
Can that be bound? can that be rein'd?
By cold ungenial rules restrain'd?
No!—leave it o'er its ample home,
The boundless wilderness, to roam;
To gleam, to tremble, and to die:
'Tis Nature's error, so am I.

Then, oh forgive my wandering theme;
Pity my faults, but do not blame!
Short my advantage, small my lore,
I have one only monitor,
Whose precepts, to an ardent brain,
Can better kindle than restrain.
Then leave to all his fancies wild,
Nature's own rude untutored child;
And should he forfeit that fond claim,
Pity his loss, but do not blame.

Let those who list, the garden choose
Where flowers are regular and profuse;
Come thou to dell and lonely lea,
And cull the mountain gems with me;
And sweeter blooms may be thine own,
By Nature's hand at random sown;
And sweeter strains may touch thy heart,
Than are producible by art.
The nightingale may give delight
A while, 'mid silence of the night,
But th' lark, lost in the heavens' blue,
Oh, her wild strain is ever new!

PART SECOND.

When Hynde return'd to her royal hall,
With Saint Columba she withdrew,
Who told her much that would befall:
For of the future much he knew.

He solved the eagle, and the oak,
The hawk, and maiden of the sea
(Of whom the hoary vision spoke),
To chiefs defined by heraldry.

But who would fight, or who would fly,
Or who their sovereign would betray,
Or what the roebuck could imply,
With all his gifts he could not say.

But there was trouble and suspense,
For, though they knew that woe would come,
The seer could not divine from whence—
If from abroad, or rise at home.

Much sorrow woman's bosom bears,
Which oft she braves with courage high;
But to that ardent soul of hers,
Suspense is utter misery.

Hynde could not hunt, she could not play,
She could not revel in the ring;
She could not fast, she could not pray,
Nor yet disclose her languishing.

One day, as in her topmost tower,
Upon her lattice she reclined,
Her eyes to mountain, sea, and shore,
Roving all restless as her mind;

She spied a hind stand at her gate,
With face of mystery and despair;
But when he came before her seat,
He told her, with a troubled air,

That fairies were to Morven come,
In thousand thousands there to dwell;
That the wild correi was their home,
Watch'd by a grisly sentinel:

That with his eyes he had them seen
In countless myriads on the hill;
Clad in their downy robes of green,
Rising and vanishing at will.

When Hynde had heard the story wild,
And saw the teller quake amain,
She look'd unto the man and smiled,
And bade him say his tale again.

Again the wondrous tale was said,
But nothing could of that be made,
It was so unallied and odd.
Again she cast her eyes abroad,
And spied on green Barcaldine lea
A horseman posting furiously;
His steed, outspent, was clotted o'er,
His neck with foam, his sides with gore;
Though great his speed, at every strain
He seem'd to eye the verdant plain
With look most haggard and aghast,
As if for spot to breathe his last;
Yet still he strain'd, leaving behind
A stream of smoke upon the wind.

The rider waved his bonnet high,
And cried aloud, as he drew nigh,
"Open your gates, and let me on—
Throw wide the gates of Beregon!
Clear—clear the way, and let me fly;
The messenger of wonder I!"

Down dropt his steed the gate before,
His breath was spent, his efforts o'er,
While the rude herald of dismay
Cursed him, and urged on foot his way.
He saw the queen at casement high,
And "Tidings!" bawl'd with tremulous cry.

The queen grew red—the queen grew wan,
From lattice to the door she ran;
Then back—then hurried down the stair,
To meet that vehement messenger;
But when his sounding step drew nigh,
She fled back to her turret high,
And, 'mid her maids, with feverish mind,
Listen'd the brown and breathless hind,
Whose habit and whose mien bespoke
A maniac from confinement broke;
But when his accents met the ear,
They show'd him fervent and sincere.

"Which is the Queen of fair Scotland?
Pardon—I need not make demand.
Oh haste, my liege, and raise afar
The beacon and the flag of war;
Warn all your chiefs t' attend you here,
For high your peril is, and near.
Let this be done without delay;
And then I have a tale to say!"

The flag of blood was raised anon,
The war-blast from the tower was blown;
The battle-whoop aloud began,
The henchmen rode, the pages ran,
The beacon which from Uock shone,
Was answered soon on Bede-na-boan,
And that from every mountain hoar,
From Melforvony to Ben-More,
Uttering afar, o'er frith and flood,
The voice of battle and of blood.

When this the peasant saw prevail,
He proffer'd to the queen his tale;
Showing the while he had a sense
Of his own mighty consequence.

Three times he drank his thirst t' allay,
Pledging the dames in courteous way;
Thrice forth his scemly leg did show,
And sleek'd the brown hair down his brow;
Then thus, in hurried, earnest way,
Began his wondrous tale to say: —

"Last eve upon the height I stood,
Where Ardnamurchan bays the flood;
The northern breeze sang on the tree,
Wrinkling the dark and purple sea;
Yet not a cloudlet was in view,
For heaven was deepening into blue.

"I thought I saw, without the bay,
Just in the line where Cana lay,
Somewhat that did the ocean shroud;
It seem'd a living, moving cloud;
I turn'd mine eyes from off the sea,
Deeming it was some phantasy;
But still, when turning round again,
I saw that vision of the main.
Nay, once I thought white foam arose,
Rolling before unnumber'd prows.

"While thus I stood in deep surprise,
The vision vanish'd from my eyes.
But whether it melted into air,
Or sunk beneath, or linger'd there,
I could not tell, for fall of night
Shaded the spectre fleet from sight;
And, though to fear not much inclined,
A kind of terror seized my mind.
All reasoning but increased my dread,
I rose at midnight from my bed,
And heard a din upon the ocean,
As if the world had been in motion;
Voices repress'd along the shores,
And lashes from a thousand oars.

"I heard them—yet confess I must,
I scarcely could my senses trust,
But deem'd some trouble sway'd my blood,
Or on enchanted ground I stood;
For all was calm at break of day,
Nor ship nor boat was in the bay.
Along the shore and heathy hill
No whisper moved, save from the rill;
Yet I could note the roaming deer
Turn from that mountain's side in fear;
No snowy flocks were straggling there,
The kid had left its wonted lair,
And the dull heifer paused to gaze
And ruminate in deep amaze.

"From what I saw at even-tide,
I deem'd that something there did hide;
If so, I knew all was not well,
But how, or why, I could not tell.
So I resolved my life to stake,
For my fair queen and country's sake.

"I clothed me in this fool's array,
I launch'd my shallop in the bay;
I cross'd Loch-Sunart to the east,
And stray'd along the mountain's breast,
Jabbering and singing as I went,
Like idiot mean and indigent.

"At first one warrior cross'd my way,
Resting his lance to make me stay;
A man he was of rugged mien,
Such arms or robes I ne'er had seen.
My hands were clasp'd my back behind,
My eyes wide open to the wind;
I did not once these hands divide,
But with my elbow turn'd aside
His lance, with wide, unalter'd stare,
As if such man had not been there.
Rough words he spoke in unknown tongue,
But still I jabber'd and I sung,
And onward pass'd, resolved to spy
The mystery out, though doom'd to die.
The warrior smiled, and laid him down;
I saunter'd, sung, and wander'd on.

"At length an armed file I spied,
Hid in the heath all side by side!
I made no motion of surprise,
But trudged, and sung, in idiot wise;
Then stretch'd me down amid the throng,
And pull'd the grass, and croon'd my song.
They seem'd amused, and smiled to see
My deep, unmoved stupidity.
My ears on all their accents hung,
But all was in an unknown tongue.

"I next went to a rising ground,
Where I could see all round and round,
And utter'd such a horrid yell,
That rocks and hills rang out the knell.
But never since I view'd the day,
Saw I such vision of dismay!
Thousands of warriors, grim and swarth,
Upraised their heads out of the earth;
Then softly, like a fairy scene,
They crept into the earth again;
Each brake was lined, above the strand,
With warriors of a foreign land.

"This brought me many an angry look,
And chastisement, and stern rebuke;
I bore them all full patiently,
And 'scaped to bring the word to thee.
O'er Morven hills I ran with speed,
I swam the Coran on my steed,
And I have ridden the Appin o'er
As never mortal rode before.
This is my tale, I vouch it true;
Much it imports, my liege, to you;
The foe is strong, the danger nigh:
My steed I've lost! and here am I."

"If that be truth," Queen Hynde replied,
"A truth in nothing falsified,

Of thy lost steed have no regard,
For ample shall be thy reward,
In gifted lands and honours high,
For thou hast acted gallantly:
If false, then of thyself take heed,
The highest tree shall be thy meed.
To prove thee honest as thou seem'st,
Say all thou saw'st, and all thou deem'st."

"I've braved the Briton on the field,
I've met the Roman shield to shield;
Of many a foe I've seen the face;
But such a rough and warlike race
As they who lie on Morven's shore,
In sooth, I ne'er beheld before.

"If there are nations north away,
As I have heard old minstrels say,
Who live by land, or live by sea,
As suits the time or casualty;
Who o'er the wave, on summer tide,
Along the wastes of ocean glide,
Or in the deep indented bay,
Like pellochs, dive to pick their prey;
And when the seasons 'gin to turn,
Amid the forests far sojourn,
Hunting the great deer to and fro,
Or burrowing, 'neath eternal snow,
Deep in the bowels of the ground,
With their unlovesome mates around
Howling the songs of other spheres,
And feasting on lank wolves and bears—
If such there are, a countless host
Of such now lies on Scotland's coast:
For all their robes are from the wood,
Or seal-skin of the northern flood;
Their beards are long, their arms unclean,
Their food the hateful haberdine.

"Further, I saw that to the sea
Their eyes reverted constantly;
There still they look'd, as if aware
That all their hopes were anchor'd there;
And thence, I judge, from Barra's shore,
This night will bring as many more;
And that, before the break of day,
Their fleet may ride in Creran bay.

"Nay, more, I dread that to their side
Some Scots have turn'd, and been their guide;
For not in all our western bound
Could such a landing-place be found;
Such solitude in bay and hill,
So deep, so lonely, and so still.

"One passenger, while I was there,
Came up the shore with lightsome air;
He sung, he whistled, and he ran;
I deem'd him one of Moidart's clan.
But as he pass'd, with luckless eye,
He saw the beach all trodden lie;
He mark'd the footsteps and stood still,
Look'd to the sea, and to the hill,
Still lingering on the tainted brink,
As if he wist not what to think.

"A chief arose with ill intent
Out of the brake, and to him went;
And with one stroke and little din
Clove the poor traveller to the chin,
Then hid him in the clustering brake.
Oh how my heart began to quake!
I thought of death, and 'gan to con
The prayer that would be soonest done.
I 'scaped them all though sore beset;
In artifice I ne'er was beat.
None else could thus have caution'd you,
Though I, who should not say it, do."

Oh when that hind aside had laid
His fool's attire, and was array'd
In belted plaid and broad claymore,
And robes which once a chieftain wore;
And came, with martial cap in hand,
Before the nobles of the land,
It would have joy'd your heart to've seen
His face of wisdom and his mien,
And aye he stretch'd with careful fold
His philabeg of tassell'd gold,
And tried with both hands to sleek down
His locks all weatherbeat and brown;
Then quite bewilder'd every sense,
With words of great magnificence.
The motley clown I do not blame,
Few are his paths that lead to fame;
One gain'd, let him that path pursue,
For great and glorious is the view.

High on a rock the palace stood,
Looking afar o'er vale and flood,
Amid a mighty citadel,
To force of man impregnable.
Seven towers it had of ample space,
Which still the stranger well may trace.
Much famed in legendary lore,
'Twas Selma in the days of yore;
But east and north the city lay,
On ridge and vale, from bay to bay,
And many a stately building shone
Within the ancient Beregon;
And many a fair and comely breast
Heaved in that jewel of the west;
While round it cliffs and walls arose
Impassable to friends and foes.

The Caledonians lay at ease,
Beleaguer'd by their hills and seas;
They knew no force by land could won
Their old imperial Beregon;
But hostile navies were their dread,
To which a thousand bays were spread,
Round every peopled vale and hill,
Where they might ravage at their will;
And never news so fraught with fear
Had met the Caledonian's ear.

Benderiloch and Appin men,
From Etive bay to Cona glen,
Led by old Connal of Lismore,
Appear'd the first on Creran shore.
Gillion of Lorn, at close of eve,
Cross'd over Connel's boisterous wave,
With seven score yeomen in his train,
Well baited on the battle-plain.
All these, with other armed men,
Knight, squire, and serf, and citizen,
Assembled were at evening fall,
Scarcely a thousand men in all.
But where the watch to keep o'er night;
Or where the danger would alight;
What foe was nigh, or what would be,
All was in dim uncertainty.

On every height and headland steep,
Wardens were placed the watch to keep,
By shores of Appin and of Lorn,
With pipe, and call, and bugle-horn,
In various notes to give alarms
To warriors resting on their arms.

The autumn eve closed on the hill;
The north was breathing brisk and chill;
The stars were sprinkled o'er the night,
With goggling and uncertain light,
As if eventful watch to keep,
Over these reavers of the deep.
What with the roar of Connel's stream;
The cormorant's awakening scream;
The constant whistling of the gale;
The dead-lights glimmering in the dale;
The shadowy mountains, bored and riven,
That seem'd to gap the eastern heaven;
It was by sages truly hight
An ominous and awful night!

High beat the heart of many a maid,
And many an ear was open laid,
Deep list'ning, with suspended breath,
To hear the signal sound of death.
Each casual clang, and breathing boom,
And voice that wandered through the gloom,
Sent to the heart a thrilling knell.
And when the morrow's sentinel,
The cock, his midnight 'larum crew,
A thousand cheeks were changed of hue;
Ten thousand heads, stunn'd and amazed,
Were from green moss and pillow raised.

The midnight came, and pass'd away,
And silence hung o'er keep and bay;
Save that three watchers, on Loch-Linhe,
Above Glen Hendal's groves of pine—
Just in the midnight's deepest reign,
When Orion with his golden chain
Had measured from the moors of Tay
To keystone of the Milky Way,—
Heard a soft lay of sorrow given,
Somewhere from out the skirts of heaven,
Much like the funeral song of pain
Which minstrel pours o'er warrior slain;
And well the strains to sorrow true,
Of Ossian's airy harp they knew,
Which his rapt spirit from the sky,
Gave to the breeze that journey'd by;
As well they knew the omen drear
Boded of danger, death, and weir.

The first watch of the morning past,
Dark was the shade o'er nature cast;
And o'er the eyes that watch had kept,
The short and dreamy slumber crept;
When all at once, from sentinel,
Burst on the air the bugle's swell:
And never did note from bugle blown
Congeal so many hearts to stone!

If thou did'st e'er the affliction bear
Of having all thou valued'st here
Placed in a frail and feeble bark,
Exposed upon the ocean dark,
And when thy spirit yearn'd the most,
The word arrived that all was lost;
Then may'st thou guess the pains that stole
Cold on the Caledonian's soul.

Unto the first alarm that broke,
No answer came, save from the rock,
For all sat list'ning in suspense,
And doubting every mortal sense;
But soon repeated was the roar,
Longer and louder than before.

Then one o'erwhelming flood of sound
Burst over Scotland round and round;
Away, away, by mountain hoar,
By moated peel, by isle, and shore,
Far eastward to the break of morn,
And o'er the thousand glens of Lorn:
Slow down the links of Spey it flew,
On Lomond waked the slumbering mew,
Till down Cantire, with rolling sweep,
It died along the southern deep.

The matron said her holiest prayer;
The household dog rose from his lair,
Turned up his snout, and howl'd amain;
The fox and eagle join'd the strain;
The capercailzie scorn'd to flee,
But gallow'd[1] on the forest tree;
The hill-wolf turn'd him to the wind,
And lick'd his bloody flew, and whined.
How shook the foemen at the noise!
They deem'd it was the land of voice.

By every mountain, lake, and glen,
By forest, frith, and shaking fen,

[1] *To gallow*, in old English, is *to cow, terrify:* but in Scotch it is *to make a loud, broken, or discordant noise;* and in this sense it is always used here. *Gallow* and *gollow* are synonymous, and peculiar to various districts.

Came rows of men in arms bedight,
Panting and hurrying through the night.
And aye as from the mountain's head,
Beside the bealfire blazing red,
The watcher's warning note was blown,
Faster they strode, and posted on.
Yet all those lines afar and near
Straight inward to one goal did steer,
As to the lake the streamlets run,
Or rays point to the morning sun;
Or like the lines of silvery foam
Around the ocean's awful tomb,
Where grim Lofodden's thirsty cave
Swallows adown the living wave;
Around, around the whirlpool's brink,
To that they point, and run, and sink.
So pour'd the warriors of the land,
Around their queen and throne to stand;
Too late they came! ere rose the sun,
The bloody fight was lost and won.

Where sounded first the watcher's horn,
Rush'd to the shore the men of Lorn;
And saw, as to the strand they press'd,
Upon the ocean's groaning breast,
As if the forest of Lismore
Came struggling on to Appin's shore.
So far that moving wood was spread,
The Sound so wholly covered,
That all along its level sheen
No image of a star was seen:
Such fleet no Scot had ever hail'd,
Nor e'er on Albyn's seas had sail'd.

Onward it came like moving wood,
Loaded and lipping with the flood,
Till every keel refused the oar,
And, stranded, lean'd on Appin shore:
Each warrior there had pledged his faith,
To win a home for life or death.

The barks were moor'd all side by side,
Then plun[illegible] warriors in the tide:—
"Now!" cried old Connal, in a tone
Of ecstasy—"on warriors, on!"—

And as the hail-cloud hanging sw[illegible]
Bursts with the thunder on the eartl[illegible]
So rush'd on death our warriors brav[illegible]
With shout that deaden'd every wave
The plun[illegible] of horses and the neigh,
The brok[illegible] and uncertain bay
Where fl[illegible]ndering warriors fought and fell;
The utte[illegible]rkness, and the knell
Of battl[illegible]ll that louder [illegible],
The fla[illegible] from the [illegible]words that flew,
Form'[illegible]ether such a scene
As wa[illegible] shall view again!

In s[illegible] when first these warriors met,
When [illegible] word to sword was set,
You [illegible]'d th[illegible]ave ween'd some meteor's ray,
Or cu[illegible]o the lame, hung o'er the bay;
So flew the fire from weapons keen,
While all was noise and rage between,
But nothing save that fire was seen.

Where Lorn with his brave horsemen came,
The coast was firm, the beach the same;
But where the galleys lay, they knew
Abrupt and deep at once it grew.
Into the wave they rode amain,
The foe withstood them, but in vain;
They drove them backward in the strife,
To plunge amid their ships for life.
But too intrepid in their wrath,
And too intent on foemen's death,
Over the beach, into the deep,
They rush'd like flock of weetless sheep,
That headlong plunge, with flurried mind,
While dogs and shepherds whoop behind;
Or like the cumbrous herd that goes,
Of panting, thirsting buffaloes,
From deep Missouri's wave to drink,
Fast press they to the stayless brink,
Pushing the foremost from the shore,
Till thousands sink to rise no more:
So plunged our yeomen over head,
Till scarce a remnant turned and fled,
While rocked the galleys to and fro,
With struggling, parting life below.

This fault the Muse may scarce define,
A breach was made in Scotia's line;
The foe in thousands gain'd the strand,
And stretch'd in files to either hand,
So that the footmen were beset,
Who still the foe had backward beat;
For when [illegible] met in the sea,
They scarcely fought unto the knee:
Now, all the waving crescent line,
Toil'd to the breasts in smoking brine,
Which round them thick and clammy grew,
A waveless tide of crimson hue;
But still they fought, though coil'd in gore,
With foes behind and foes before.
No son of Albyn held at ought
His life, or harbour'd once a thought
That on his coast might step a foe,
Who first not o'er his breast should go.

Their peril shrouded fr[illegible]nde,
Amid the morning's m[illegible] appeal
Each warrior fought for [illegible]al.
As if his all had been at stake,
As if the safety of the land
Lay in the force of his right hand.
No groan of hero's death could tell,
As 'mid the thickening wave he fell;
Warriors on shivering warriors stood,
Choked in that tide of briny blood,

Oh, when the sun through morning
Look'd over Cana's cliffs sublime,

Never on Appin's shore was spread
Such piles of blench'd and mangled dead!
The tide, receding, left a stain
Of crimson ever to remain,
(For since that day no tempest's shock
Can bleach the colour from the rock),
And left, in woeful guise the while,
Troops of pale warriors, rank and file,
Stretch'd on the strand, in lines uneven,
With their cold eye-balls fixed on heaven;
Their bodies swathed in bloody foam,
Their heads turned to their native home.

And every corse of Albyn's race,
Had marks of gloom in his dead face,
As still for life and force he gasp'd,
And still for fight his sword was grasp'd.
Each visage seemed to interchange
With others' grin of stern revenge;
But nigher view'd, it wore an air
Of gloom, of sorrow, and despair;
As the last feelings of the heart,
Had been a pang of grief to part
From Caledon when needed most,
And that his powerful aid was lost.

Columba, with his sovereign fair,
Had spent the latter hours in prayer,
E'er since the time the bugle rung,
And many a holy hymn they sung.
They never knew till break of day,
That Scotia's host had waned away;
They knew of battle on the coast,
But little ween'd that all was lost.
And when the morning's purple beam
On Beregon began to gleam,
Oh, what a scene for sovereign's eye
Was open'd slow and gradually!
The bay all fringed with glistening gore;
The human wreck along the shore;
A thousand masts from bark and barge,
Pointing to the horizon's verge;
For all around the Keila bay
The fleet was moor'd, and leaning lay;
And dreadful hosts of warriors grim
The plains beyond the gate bedim;
All crowding, gathering, bearing on
To hapless, [illegible] Beregon.
Queen Hynde, from [illegible] wounded Lorn,
Thus spoke in words [illegible]en outworn,

"My ancient [illegible], back from the strand,
[illegible] their last and latest stand
Within the porch, with full intent
To fall, or entrance there prevent.

Too plain it was that all was lost;
But what astounded Hynde the most,
Was the broad banner of the foe
High streaming on the morning's brow;
For on it flash'd, in dreadful wise,
A sable bull of monstrous size;
His horns, his colour, and his frame,
His furious mood, the very same
As that, remember'd still with awe,
Which in her hideous dream she saw.
That vision's close when she thought on,
Her heart grew cold, and turn'd to stone!

She saw a foresight had been given
To her of future things by Heaven;
But yet so shadowy and so dim,
On reason's surf it seem'd to swim,
And all the struggling of the mind
Its form and substance could not find.
But plain it was to every sense,
That some sublime intelligence,
Beyond the power of mind to scan,
Existed between God and man.

Distemper'd thoughts her bosom stirr'd,
Her father's words again recurr'd:
And ah! the thought that there could be
A thing of immortality—
A spirit that had pass'd away,
Of one in dust and death that lay—
Still by her side, to smile, or frown,
Converse, and mingle with her own,
Was one so deeply ponder'd on
That reason waver'd on her throne.

Message on message posting came,
Which so perplex'd the youthful dame,
That all her mind's exertion fled,
A stupor on her brain was shed.
Her royal city of command,
The great emporium of the land,
She [illegible] exposed to foemen's ire,
To sword, to ravage, and to fire.
Her nobles gone to fetch supply;
One leader wounded mortally;
The other brave, but hard beset;
Herself, with holy anchoret,
Surrounded by a ruthless foe:—
Alas! what could the virgin do?
No [illegible]on stay or succour near,
She [illegible] to heaven, and dropt a tear.

"[illegible]ai[illegible]nour'd liege," Columba said,
"Suffe[illegible]r servant, thus array'd,
Forth to [illegible]e foe in peace to fare,
And learn from whence and who they are;
Their purpose, and their dire inten
And why on war with maiden bent.
We haply thus may stay the war,
Till Lennox come, and rapid Mar:
I'll wend unaided and alone,
For every tongue to me is known."—
The queen approved the wise appeal,
And lauded high his honest zeal.

Forth stepp'd the sire the hosts [illegible]n,
Bearing a bough of holly green;
The marshall'd foe his journey spe[illegible]llow
And to their king the seer was led.

A prince he seem'd of courage high,
Of mighty frame and lion eye,
With something generous in his face,
A shade of noble courteousness,
Mix'd with a stern and jealous part,
Th' effect of caution, not of heart;
And by him stood a prince most fair,
Haco, his sister's son and heir.

Before the king Columba stood,
Nor bowed he head nor lifted hood;
Erect he stood with tranquil grace,
Looking the monarch in the face,
Loth to avale, if it might be,
One jot of Scotland's dignity;
And still more loth to bring the blame
Of cringing on the Christian name:
Serene he stood, like one prepared
To answer, rather than be heard.

One surly glance the monarch threw,
But momently that glance withdrew,
For well his eye had learn'd to trace
The human soul from human face.
But such a face, and such an eye,
Of tranquil equanimity,
He had not view'd in all his reign
O'er Scania's stormy, wild domain,
'Mong all the dark and stern compeers
Of Odin's rueful worshippers.

"Who art thou that, in such array,
With cowled head and frock of gray,
Approachest on unbending knee
The face of sovereign majesty?"

"I wist not, king, to whom I came,
What rank he claim'd, or what his name,
Else I had render'd honours due,
For to th' awards of Heaven I bow;
And well I know, the mighty hand,
That rules the ocean and the land,
O'er mankind his peculiar care,
Places the sovereign powers that are;
If such thou art, I'll honours pay;
But first thy name and lineage say,
That thus thou comest in armour sheen,
Against a young and virgin queen."

"As suits you, friend or foe I am,
Eric of Norway is my name:
My lineage is supreme and high,
Of Odin's race that rules the sky;
All Scandinavia owns my reign,
From Finmark to the northern main.
My errand is, I frankly own,
To win your queen, and wear your crown;
That all the northern world may be
One huge, resistless monarchy.
If young Queen Hynde, of fair renown,
Will yield to me herself and crown,
Our flag of war shall soon be furl'd;
I'll make her mistress of the world:
If not, to me it seems as nought,
I'll take her, and her land to boot.
I and my warriors value less
Your forces than one bitter mess;
I'll crush them like a moth, and must
Lay ancient Beregon in dust;
My soldiers' prey it needs must be,
Though I regret it grievously.

"Go, tell your queen I proffer her
My hand, my love, my crown to wear;
And would she save her land from scathe,
Her warriors and her chiefs from death,
Her maids from brunt of rude desire,
Her capital from sword and fire,
Let her be sure her choice to make
Of that perforce she needs must take.
Eric of Norway is not wont
Of deeds he cannot do to vaunt."

"Forsooth, King Eric, I must say,
Such wooer comes not every day,
So frank to ask, and free to give,
So downright, and so positive;
So brief a courtship ne'er was known
Within the bounds of Caledon.
How it may end I little wot,
But the beginning has been hot;
And hence I pray that God may keep
Such northern wooers north the deep.

"However, I shall well agree,
I not dislike your policy;
For should your high designs succeed,
The holy faith it needs must spread.
As ghostly counsellor, and guide,
And messenger of Heaven beside,
I may not, and I will not, cease
To cultivate eternal peace.
But should—as 'tis my firm belief,
Her troth be pledged to Scottish chief,
What then remains?—She can't revoke;
A sovereign's word may not be broke."

"Let arms decide the right," said he;
"The sword be judge 'twixt him and me."—
This said he in so stern a tone,
The saint stood mute, reply was none.
"Whoe'er thou art," the king rejoin'd,
"As vicar of the royal Hynde,
I thee respect, and make appeal
If I not fair and frankly deal.
My sovereignty I lay aside,
From subject wight to win my bride;
If vanquish'd I request no more,
I yield her to the conquerer;
Better one man than thousands die:
Thou hast my answer, homeward hie.
If not ere noon assent returns,
You yield perforce, your city burns;
I'll leave nor pile nor standing stone
In all your boasted Beregon."

"Most gallant sovereign, I implore
One other word and then no more:
What if my queen have pledged her troth,
By royal word or solemn oath,
To sundry chiefs, in their degrees
Bound to particular services;
And he that most avails the land,
To share her throne, and win her hand?—
I pledge no word that this I know,
But, sooth, I deem and judge it so."

"Then bring them all," King Eric cried—
"Bring one, bring two upon your side;
Princes or peasants let them be—
Bring ten—it is the same to me!
Men to your men I will produce,
If Hynde from 'mong the victors choose."

"In thee, King Eric, I perceive
A noble foe or friend we have:
Forthwith before my queen I'll lay
Your gallant suit, for yea or nay."

Much was the stir when this was known
In palace of old Beregon.
Sore they demurred, yet it did seem
A respite in a great extreme—
A respite from a deadening blow
By an o'erpowering reckless foe.
Proud Gaul of Ross, and lordly Mar,
And Donald Gorm, were distant far;
For Sutherland they look'd in vain
From verges of the northern main;
Lochorn was nigh, and Allan Bane,
Lochaber's fair and goodly thane,
But all uncertain was their power:
Argyle was look'd for every hour,
And when he came to aid the war,
They knew that neither he, nor Mar,
Nor any Scottish chief, would bear
King Eric's brag in deeds of weir.
They ween'd that warriors there were none
Could match the chiefs of Caledon;
Yet such a stake as queen and crown
On such a die was never known.

While thus they sat in counsel slow,
And wist not how or what to do—
While fears were high and feelings strong,
While words were few and pauses long—
Queen Hynde, from off her royal seat,
Thus spoke in words and mood elate:—

"My ancient friends, full well I see
Your kind concern and fears for me;
No more your risk, no more your stake,
Than Albyn chooses that to make.
I'm a mere woman—and my crown,
With your support, is great, I own;
Without it, 'tis but sordid dust—
Let Eric take us, if he must!
Though both are won, and I constrain'd,
The soul of Albyn is not chain'd;
By hard constraint whate'er I do,
Be to your independence true.

"I'm great or small at your behest—
A queen, a trifle, or a jest;
I rule because you will it so,
No more can mighty Eric do.
I take his offer—three to three
His claim shall straight decided be;
From out the number that subdues,
My husband and my lord I choose.

"Were there a dread—as there is none—
That chosen chiefs of Caledon
Can e'er to barbarous foemen yield,
Or fainting quit the combat field,
Then let King Eric take his all—
His queen and kingdom nominal!

"Whereas, should we this pause forego,
And baulk a proud and powerful foe,
Our wealth and crown ere falls the night
Must yield to his resistless might.
I take his offer without dread;
Be this proviso only made,
That, as a queen and crown may go
From nation by a single blow,
Whoever wins, on yonder plain
In seven days thence shall fight again:
That day shall all decisive be—
The victor's gain, my crown and me.
But in the interim, I shall claim,
In whose soever power I am,
Such honours, deference, and esteem,
As may a virgin queen beseem."

Consent was full, applause was high,
For why, no better meed was nigh.
Columba and old Connal went
Forth to King Eric's royal tent,
Which now a wonder rose to view,
Spangled with furs of every hue.
The clause was joyfully approved,
For Erie blood and battery loved.
The day was set, the hour, the field,
The brief agreement sign'd and seal'd,
And all the Norse to music's tone
Enter'd the gates of Beregon.
Friendly they were, and madly gay,
And, sooth, such revel and deray,
Such wassailing and noiance vast,
Had not been seen for ages past.
The maids of Beregon were pleased.
For they were flatter'd, woo'd, and teazed;
And well 'tis known that woman's mind
Is still to noise and stir inclined;
She would be mark'd, and woo'd withal,
Rather to ill than not at all.

Ah! loveliest of the lovely throng!
Why darts that frown my page along?
If I from courtesy have swerved,
I may be blamed, and may deserve't;

I oft have been, and oft will be—
It may not, shall not, be by thee.

Why should I tell of that I rue,
Or sing, deluded flowers, of you?
Of seven fair sisters in a bower,
Each lovelier than the opening flower;
Chaste as the snow of winter storms,
Or stream that bathed their lovely forms;
And they were pure as they were fair—
So deem'd we all—and so they were.
The spoilers came—their toils were few!
How can I sing of that I rue?

Oh, I have thought, and thought again,
And still the memory gives me pain!
Nor can I deem that beauty's glow,
The liquid eye, and radiant brow,
The smile that, like the morning dew,
Sheds gladness on the gazer's view—
The graceful form, the gliding tread,
Too light to bruise the daisy's head—
The downy locks, with roses twined,
Or wanton waving in the wind—
The mantling blush so sweetly spread,
Changing the pale rose to the red—
All but a gloss in kindness given
To woman's youth by pitying Heaven
For glories lost by primal sin,
To veil unsanctitude within!

O that such thoughts I could consign
To darkness distant and condign!
If broods the soul on such alloy,
Then where is mine and nature's joy?
Still let me love thee as thou art,
Though passions rankle at thy heart;
Though chroniclers point thee for ill,
I'll ween thee pure and gentle still.
I'll say, when thousand faults combine,
My sex has dross as well as thine;
And in my last and utmost need,
I'll fly to Calvin's sweeping creed,
And say of crimes of deepest hue,
They were predestined thee to do
Ere thou wast born: though thine the ill,
What is our lot we must fulfil!

Nay, rather than to thousands yield,
Or fly defeated from the field,
I'll quit this jointered age and thee—
This age of bond and bankruptcy—
With all its sordid thirst of gold,
And conjure up the times of old;
Raising from ancient days a queen,
And maids that were, or might have been,
That I may mould them as I will,
And love thee, froward trifler, still.
Only—though light I hold thy jeer—
None of thy pruding let me hear!
I know thee well—too well to feign,
And have my way, as thou hast thine.
If bards and maids must disagree,
Woe to the fair!—and woe to me!

I've sung of wake and roundelay,
In beauteous Mary's early day;
Of charms that could all hearts command;
Of maiden borne to fairy land;
Of worlds of love and virgins bright;
Of pilgrims to the land of light.
And I have sung to those who know
Of maiden's guilt and failings too;
And all in love to paint to thee
The charms of perfect purity.

Now I've call'd forth a patriot queen
Of generous soul and courtly mien;
And I've upraised a wayward elf
With faults and foibles like thyself;
And these as women thou shalt see,
More as they are than they should be.
Then wrangle not with one whose skill
Is short and laggard to his will;
Who yet can hope, and brow the heaven,
Of God and man to be forgiven
For every strain he dared essay,
For every line of every lay,
That would to purity impart
One stain, or wound the virtuous heart.

PART THIRD.

Whoe'er in future time shall stray
O'er these wild valleys west away,
Where first, by many a trackless strand,
The Caledonian held command;
Where ancient Lorn, from northern shores
Of Clyde to where Glen-Connel roars,
Presents in frowning majesty
Her thousand headlands to the sea:
Oh, traveller! whomsoe'er thou art,
Turn not aside, with timid heart,
At Connel's tide, but journey on
To the old site of Beregon;
I pledge my word, whether thou lovest
The poet's tale, or disapprovest,
So short, so easy is the way,
The scene shall well thy pains repay.
There shalt thou view, on rock sublime,
The ruins gray of early time,
Where frowning o'er the foamy flood,
The mighty halls of Selma stood:
And mark a valley stretching wide,
Inwall'd by cliffs on either side,
By curving shore, where billows broke,
And triple wall from rock to rock:

Low in that strait, from bay to bay,
The ancient Beregonium[1] lay.

Old Beregon! what soul so tame
Of Scot that warms not at thy name?
Or where the bard, of northern clime,
That loves not songs of Selma's time?
Yes, while so many legends tell,
Of deeds and woes that there befell,
These ruins shall be dear to fame,
And brook the loved, the sacred name.

Nay, look around, on green-sea wave,
On cliff, and shelve, which breakers lave:
On stately towers and ruins gray,
On moat, on island, glen, and bay;
On cataract and shaggy mound,
On mighty mountains far around
Jura's fair bosom, form'd and full;
The dark and shapeless groups of Mull;
Others far north, in haze that sink,
Proud Nevis, on Lochaber's brink,
And blue Cruachan, bold and riven,
In everlasting coil with heaven:—
View all the scene, and view it well,
Consult thy memory, and tell
If on the earth exists the same,
Or one so well deserves the name.[2]

Thou still may'st see, on looking round,
That, saving from the northern bound,
Where stretch'd the suburbs to the muir,
The city stood from foes secure.
North on Bornean height was placed
King Eric's camp, o'er heathery waste;
And on Barvulen ridge behind,
Rock'd his pavilion to the wind,
Where royal banners, floating high
Like meteors, stream'd along the sky.

Within the palace he had been,
And converse held with Scotland's queen;
And the north tower, of strong defence,
Was given him for his residence.
There over-night he would not stay,
But there he sojourn'd day by day;
For, sooth to say, as well he might,
King Eric was in woeful plight;
For ne'er was heart of rosy maid,
Nor amorous youth, nor dotard, laid
So wholly under love's arrest,
As was King Eric's noble breast.

Queen Hynde was his perpetual theme,
His hourly thought, his nightly dream;
And no discourse could chance to be
Of war, or peace, or policy,
In which, with fondness archly seen,
He introduced not Albyn's queen.
It was a theme beloved so well,
He long'd and loved on it to dwell.

She met him, but his presence thence
She shunn'd, as not to give offence;
She had no thought, no pride, no aim,
But what her country's rights became;
And in the converse them between,
Such majesty was in her mien,
Such dignity with sweetness mix'd,
The soul of Eric was transfix'd:
From former, ruder joys estranged,
His very nature seem'd exchanged.

The comeliest youth of northern name,
Prince Haco, mark'd the growing flame,
And wild impatience fired his mind,
To see that fair, that wondrous Hynde,
That thus could raise in warrior's core,
Feelings unknown, unfelt before.
Oft watch'd he round the tower alone,
But word or intercourse was none,
Till, feigning tale of import high,
He gain'd admittance artfully.

[1] A celebrated ancient city, the first capital and emporium of the Scots in Albion. Its castle, according to Boethius and Harrison's *Chronologie*, was founded by King Fergus, so early as 327 years before the birth of our Saviour, and 420 years after the building of Rome. Around that castle (the Selma of Ossian) the city had continued to extend for the space of several centuries, until at length the marble chair and the seat of government were removed to Dunstaffnage, on the southern side of the bay. The site of Beregonium is in that district of ancient Lorn now called Ardchattan, although Boethius includes it in the bounds of Loch-Quhaber. The castle, situated on the top of a huge insular rock, near to the head of a fine bay, and in the midst of a level plain, must, at that period, have been rendered impregnable, without any great effort in fortification. It is altogether a singular and romantic scene; and, being situated on the new road from Dalmallie to Fort-William, by Counel Ferry and Appin, it is well worthy the attention of the curious, and indeed of every tourist interested in the phenomena of nature. That this city, with its towers and palaces, was destroyed by fire from heaven, tradition, song, and history all agree; and if ever oral testimony from an age so distant was borne out by positive and undeniable proofs, it is in this case, so much out of the course of nature and providence. All that remains of this mighty citadel, with its seven towers, is one solid mass of pumice, burned and soldered together in an impervious heap, wholly distinct from the rock on which it is situated. The outer wall, as well as the forms of the towers, may still be traced, but all are melted down to trivial and irregular circles of this incrusted lava. And as there can be little doubt respecting the existence of this renowned castle and city, so it is manifest, to me at least, that no human operation could ever have effected so mighty and universal a transmutation as is there to be witnessed.—See Macculloch's *Letters*, *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, *&c.*

In the place where the city stood, two streets, well paved, are still easy to be traced by a little digging: the one of these is called in Gaelic Market Street, and the other, Meal Street. In making the new road, a vaulted gangway was here discovered under ground; and about twenty-five years ago, a man, in digging fuel, found one of the large wooden pipes that had conveyed the water across the plain to the citadel. These few remains of the famous Beregonium have been preserved in the bowels of the earth; but nothing remains above ground, either of city or walls, but a few irregular lines of trivial cinder.

[2] *Selma* signifies the beautiful view; *Beregon*, or *Pereon*, as it is pronounced, the serpent of the strait.

Hynde to Columba's aisle had gone,
An hour with him to spend alone,
Just as the prince was introduced
As messenger of secret trust.

By wayward chance it happ'd just then,
That frolicsome and restless Wene,
In all the royal robes of state
Array'd, on throne of ivory sate,
Aping a queen with such a face,
Such majesty, and proud grimace,
That all the noble maids around
With laughter sunk upon the ground.
One personated haughty Mar,
One Norway's boist'rous brand of war,
One Allan Bane, one Coulan Brande,
And one the Lord of Sutherland;
And each address'd the suit to Wene
In wooer terms, as Scotland's queen.

To one the imp, with simpering grin,
Turn'd up her nose, and tiny chin;
Her scarf of tissued gold flung by,
And raised her shapely arm on high,
Saying, in act, most gracefully,
"Have done, good friend! I'll none of thee."
Another she apart would eye,
With piercing glance, or ogle sly;
Another flatter—then again
Turn to King Eric of the main;
And all the patriot queen display,
In dignified and generous way.

While this high game was at the height,
And all were wrapt in wild delight,
A gentle rap was at the door;
"Come in," said Wene; and on the floor
A bowing page these words address'd,
"A messenger in speechless haste
From royal Eric craves thine ear."
"'Tis well," said Wene; "let him appear
Before OUR throne." These words she said
So like the queen, the page obey'd.
Each maid look'd to the throne on high
With dimpling cheek and pregnant eye,
And scarce from laughter could refrain
At the effrontery of Wene;
But dreading sore that such a jest
Would lead to scorn and wrath at least.

No time was now these fears to state,
To reason, or expostulate;
For, momently, in royal hall,
Prince Haco bow'd amid them all.
His courtly form so tall and fair,
His flowing curls of flaxen hair,
His amorous look, and princely gear,
Soon made him general favourite there.

"Pardon, illustrious queen," he cried,
"Flower of the world, and Albyn's pride,
For this intrusion on your court:
I tidings bring of strange report;
Haco's my name, King Eric's heir,
My message suits your private ear."

With sovereign air, and motion dumb,
Wene pointed with her queenly thumb
Unto the door—then, in a tone
Soft yet majestic, cried, "Begone,
WE wish with him to be alone;
Shortly your counsels WE may crave;
To Scotland's weal WE are the slave."
Forth stepp'd the dames with curtsey low;
To each the prince return'd a bow;
But as the hindmost disappear'd,
A tittering sound of mirth he heard,
And in his brilliant eye was blent
Shame, anger, and astonishment.

"Regard not, prince, a court-dame's fleer;
To you they mean no scoff or jeer;
'Tis at their mistress and their queen,
And she must bear't," said wicked Wene.
"Prince, when misfortune's at the door,
It looses tongues were mute before.
They jeer that thus their queen should be
In hall alone with prince like thee;
Nor is it meet—but I must bow
To things unfitting virgin now."

"And, sooth," said Haco, "much I fear
The queen will turn on me the jeer,
When she shall hear, as now she must,
My message of important trust.
Forgive thy servant, I intreat,
'Tis love that brings me to thy feet;
To see thy face, thy words to hear,
Was the intent that brought me here."

"Love!" said the urchin, with a frown
Such as from eye was never thrown—
"Love dar'st thou name to Albyn's queen,
Whose face before thou hast not seen?
Such theme WE list not to discuss;
WE must not yet be toy'd with thus."

"Forgive my youth, angelic dame,
And glowing heart of moulded flame;
Thou shalt not need one word to check,
Nor hear aught but with due respect;
I've set my head upon a die,
To pay this homage to thine eye;
For of thy form of matchless grace,
Thy cherub eye, and lovely face,
So much I heard, that heavenly bliss
Seem'd less to me than hour like this;
But all was short that I heard told,
To beauty that I now behold."

I've said before, and must repeat,
That Wene had beauty, archness, wit;
No young man on her face could look
Who felt not pang he ill could brook;

He loved, or in his bosom strove
With something similar to love;
And when she tried her witching skill,
Her eye with certainty could kill.
Now, in the royal robes array'd,
With gold and jewels overlaid,
She seem'd a being of romance,
A thing of perfect elegance;
And Haco, trembling, scarcely trow'd
Before an earthly maid he bow'd—
Such dignity, in mien and eye,
A man beholds in majesty!

O titled rank, long be it thine
From common gaze remote to shine!
And long be nursed thy speech refined
From scrutiny of vulgar mind!
That thing, in robes of state attired,
The closer seen, the less admired,
Kept at a distance, still may draw
The homage of respect and awe:
Therefore most humbly do I sue,
In name of rank and reverence due,
Subordination, manners prim,
And all that keeps a land in trim,
To keep thy sphere, whate'er it be,
From scar of scoundrel scrutiny.
This thing did Wene, for honour's sake,
Upholding rank she chanced to take;
And Wene knew more, as you'll espy,
Of men and things than you or I.

As Haco spoke, the elf the while
Lighted her visage with a smile,
And gave him look that thrill'd each vein;
For who could stand the eye of Wene?
The prince took heart, and blushing said,
"Here, at thy feet, O royal maid,
One moment list th' unwelcome theme,
And hear thy servant's simple scheme."

"Not at OUR feet," Queen Wene replied,
With voice and air most dignified;
"A prince thou art—a foe, 'tis true—
Yet—rise—that honour is thy due.
No good from this can WE divine;
But let us hear that scheme of thine."

"Oh say not foe!—If in this heart
One atom acted foeman's part,
I'd dig it from its latent goal,
The sanguine fountain of the soul!
What I will do, thou yet shalt see,
For peace, for Scotland, and for thee.
My uncle Eric loves thee more
Than ever king did queen before;
I know it—but he's old—whilst thou
Hast all that loved and living glow
Which youth on virgins can bestow.
Now, since I've seen thee, and approve,
And feel to see thee is to love,
Might Haco but thy heart engage,
No deadly wars the Norse might wage,
For, take my word, if here they stay,
War there must be, do as you may;
In spite of truce or treaties made,
Their breaking forth is but delay'd.
As certain as the wind must blow
Cold o'er their polar wastes of snow,
So, where the chiefs of Scania are,
Must there be ravage, waste, and war.

"This to prevent, and Scotland free,
Might you transfer your troth to me,
Here might we reign on stable throne,
In old imperial Beregon;
And to your Albyn's present bound
Unite our islands all around.
And when the time comes, as it may,
That Scandinavia owns my sway,
O'er these thy towers shall wave unfurl'd
The ensigns of the northern world,
And Scotia's free, unyielding land,
To all these regions give command.
These things I deem'd, O beauteous Hynde,
Worthy the counsel of your mind.
To do them all I pledge my troth—
No son of Odin breaks his oath."

"Prince," said Queen Wene, "you pledge too high;
Even sanguine maid may not rely
On such great privilege and command,
And 'vantage to her native land;
But yet the eye would be severe,
And heart, that judged you insincere.
Yet all the answer I can deign,
As 'tis—(to those o'er whom I reign,
The slave and vassal, subject still
To what they feel and what they will)—
Is this, to thank you, and take leave.
This hand in friendship please receive;
And, as thou lovest my peace and bliss,
Venture no more on scheme like this."

Haco kneel'd down in rapture bland,
And took the elfin's queenly hand,
Impress'd it with a kiss sincere,
And wet the bracelet with a tear;
Whilst Wene, with all her shrewd address,
Could scarce her merriment suppress.
The prince upraised his humid eye,
And noting well her aspect sly,
Turn'd half away with mimic flush,
With dimple and with fairy blush;
Fled all at once his humble air,
And but the lover nought was there.
Light as the bound of roebuck young,
To footstool of the throne he sprung;
Put one arm round the royal neck;
The other, with all due respect,
Her jewell'd bosom did unfold
The gentle form and arms to hold;

And then did lips in silence tell
Where lover's lip delights to dwell.
Full oft can maid, with frowning brows,
Reprove the act she well allows,
Though dear, as now, th' impassioned scene—
And action was the soul of Wene!

Prince Haco's youthful heart o'erflow'd,
And turn'd to wax that liquid glow'd;
And that fond kiss a seal has set
Of female form and coronet
On it, so deep, that from its core
That form was ne'er erased more;
For every thought his mind pursued,
The dear, the treacherous form renew'd.

True, though Queen Wene her squire beloved
With sharp and cutting words reproved,
Yet in her radiant eye was seen
No proud offence nor pointed spleen;
And as he left her throne supreme,
His ardent spirit to inflame,
She cast that look of matchless art,
That never fail'd on young man's heart,
And said, with sigh, "Hard is my lot!
Had I my will—as *I have not!*"—
Then bent she down her brow sublime,
And wiped her cheek of beauty's prime.

The winding stair had steps a score—
Prince Haco made them only four;
And when he reach'd the outer gate,
That led from Selma's halls of state,
Adown the steep, from rock to stone,
Light as a kid, he bounded on,
And won the street of Beregon;
Pleased to the soul with his address,
His courage, and his bold success.

Vain simple youth! thy bosom's queen,
The lovely and mischievous Wene,
On tassell'd footstool of the throne,
In powerless laughter hath sunk down;
And, prince, 'tis all at thy expense—
Thy ardour, truth, and impudence.

Loth would Dunedin's daughter be,
T' admit such license, Wene, like thee;
Even though a prince or general came,
Or poet, a much greater name;
For I have seen the mincing thing,
As dancing round the gleesome ring,
A gap leave in our saraband,
And shrink from poet's gloveless hand;
As if the touch of sun-burned palm
Could discompose the level calm
Of virgin blood or sacred core,
Or make the guiltless so no more.

Oh shame—oh shame!—that such a blot
Should e'er attach to lovely Scot!
Oft have I mark'd the rueful flaw,
And blush'd at what I heard and saw.

No book, however pure each thought,
Though by divine or matron wrote,
Dar'st thou essay aloud to read,
Till every page is duly weigh'd.
And each equivocation eyed,
And conn'd, and all constructions tried;
And then thou skipp'st whole pages o'er,
Of Galt, of Byron, and of Moore.
This have I seen, and grieved anew
At thy constructions so untrue.

Would'st thou this cherish'd frippery weigh
In reason's scale, 'tis plain as day,
That fishing, hunting on the scent
For what thou know'st was never meant,
Of all indelicacies framed
By heart impure, or folly named,
Is sure the worst, the most confess'd.
Oh, such discoveries well attest
To what research the thoughts are led,
In what a school the mind was bred!

In Selma's halls much laughter grew,
And many queries Wene forth drew;
But not one word would she unfold,
Till to the queen the whole she told,
Who smiled, half in delight and pain,
At the unbridled freaks of Wene.
From that day forth, right carefully,
She shunn'd the glance of Haco's eye;
No more as queen he her could see,
And less she did not choose to be;
But some supposed her thoughts were given
To him at least as much as heaven;
While he, most blest illustrious wight,
Was crazed, was drunken with delight.
A queen's own lover! Yes, forsooth—
And such a queen!—O happy youth!
His step grew lighter than the wind,
Aye when he thought of beauteous Hynde;
And often to himself he talk'd,
Smiling and swaggering as he walk'd—
"Well done, Prince Haco! Say who can,
Thou hast not quit thee like a man!"

Now every day and every hour
Brought new supplies of Scottish power.
Lochaber's thane came down the coast,
With full seven hundred in his host;
And on the eve of that same day,
Came all the motley tribes of Spey,
Led by a chief of eastern fame,
Mordun Moravius by name.
And from the Dee's wild branching flood,
The rapid Mar, of royal blood,
Brought his grim files, to battle bred,
Against the Pict and Saxon led,
Till for high deeds they were renown'd
The bravest troops on British ground.

Then came old Diarmid of Argyle,
With men from many a southern isle.

Round whose domains the waters flow,
From far Cantire to dark Loch-Ow;
Two thousand men, a hardy train,
Rose from these margins of the main.

Then Donald Gorm, the Lord of Skye,
Came down attended gallantly,
With pagan standards broad unfurl'd,
The remnants of a heathen world.
And last, but steadiest of the band,
The loyal Lord of Sutherland
Came with his clans from frith and glen;
And Harold with his Caithness men.
These then the names of highest worth,
That ruled the land from south to north.

But, long ere this, the holy seer
Had fail'd at council to appear;
Matins were said, and vespers sung,
In royal hall, by old and young;
But Columba was gone, yet how,
Or when, or whence, they did not know;
While sadness, solemn and resign'd,
Sat on the brow of lovely Hynde.

In council there was deep surmise
Why he had gone in secret guise;
Some blamed him for a coward's part,
And some of deep and monkish art;
And all the chiefs arrived of late,
Convened in fiery fierce debate,
Arraign'd his counsels to the last,
The armistice—all that had pass'd.
What shame, they said, to risk with foe
Their queen and country at a blow!
As who could answer for his might,
Or skill, or courage, in the fight?
While the high stakes for which he stood
Sufficient were to chill the blood,
The highest soul the most to alarm,
And wrest the nerve from hero's arm.
In short, one feeling there prevail'd,
A wayward one, to be bewail'd;
It was, that, maugre dangers deep,
That shameful truce they would not keep.

"List me, my lords," said rapid Mar,
That whirlwind in the field of war,
And at the council-board the same,
A very wreath of mounting flame;
While all too many fierce, austere,
Congenial souls of his were there—
"List me. Who was it made the vow
To keep this peace?—Was't I or you?—
Or who this foolish combat set?
Who but a peevish anchoret,
Who knew not of our high command,
Or the resources of the land.
The queen, you say, in council high
Approved the truce: I that deny.
Who is there that our queen should sway
To such a deed when we're away?
We are the land, we'll let them know—
The people and the sovereign too.
Arouse, then, lords, and let us rush
On these rude bears their force to crush;
O'erwhelm them in their bloated den,
That loathsome stye of living men,
And leave them neither root, nor stem,
Nor tongue to howl their requiem!"

"Here is the sword and warrior form
Shall lead the fray!" cried Donald Gorm.

Then rose old Diarmid of Argyle,
With brow severe and placid smile;
Upraised his hand amid the rage,
The wild commotion to assuage,
And thus began:—"My lords, I deem
This truce was made in great extreme,
When none were nigh the foe to check,
Or crown or city to protect;
And, by its breach would we not draw
Disgrace on Albyn's throne and law?
Would it not be more courteous plan,
To fight their champions, man to man?
And if the issue falls aright,
As fall it must to Scottish might,
Then all is well. But should the Norse
Put Albyn's heroes to the worse,
Then be the vigour of our host
Strain'd to the height, else all is lost;
For ne'er to proud presumptuous foe
Must we our queen and crown forego.
I say not how we shall proceed,
Each day's events must rule the deed;
But in one point we'll all agree,
Of foreign thraldom to be free.
I thank you, chiefs, for this regard,
And pray no gasconade be heard,
Till once the important lists be set,
And champions hand to hand have met;
And then, let that eventful day
Our future deeds and counsels sway."

Assent ensued, but some there were
Who look'd with discontented air.
The chief of these, the Lord of Skye,
Bit his proud lip, and bent his eye,
And muttered some impatient say
Of the intolerance of delay.
With right or wrong, he long'd for blows
With Albyn's fierce invading foes,
Who long, on prey and havoc keen,
To him had pesterous neighbours been;
But voices bore it, and the while
The suffrages were for Argyle.

That ancient chief again address'd
His stern compeers, and warmly press'd
Of peace the strong necessity,
Mix'd with their foes as they would be;
And further said, "I grieve to hear
Dishonour cast on Albyn's seer;

A man, the most upright and true,
That e'er our sinful nation knew;
Whose warmest prayers, and highest zeal,
Are all for Scotland's worth and weal.
Where he has gone, I can't divine,
But for his truth the pledge be mine,
Of word and honour, that the saint
On scheme for our behoof is bent.
Either on secret mission sped
To Christian prince for timely aid,
Or else in fasting day and night
Before his God, in piteous plight;
For all our sins imploring Heaven
That they in mercy be forgiven;
And that this land, within whose bound,
The Cross of Christ a rest hath found,
May 'scape this overwhelming snare,
And still be God's peculiar care.

"Nor deem this naught. In olden time,
In writings holy and sublime,
Strong instances stand on record
Of times unnumber'd, when the Lord,
At the request of prophets, rent
The floors of heaven and succour sent.

"There stands one record, never lost,
Of captain of the Lord's own host,
Who pray'd on Gilgal's plain by night
Against the invading Amorite;
And lo! the heaven's dark breast distended,
And from its hideous folds descended
Hailstones of such enormous frame,
Like broken pillars down they came,
Or fragments, splinter'd and uneven,
Of rocks shook from the hills of heaven.
Upon the Amorite's marshall'd power
Was cast down this appalling shower,
Till thousands of their proud array
Deform'd and shatter'd corses lay.

"Still God's dread work was but begun:
At man's behest he stay'd the sun;
Arrested, fix'd in heaven, he shone,
And the moon paused o'er Ajalon;
Until the arm of man had done
What arm of angel had begun.
Then let no sinner, old or young,
Against a prophet wag his tongue,
Lest vengeance on his head befall,
And bring down wrath upon us all.

"At holy Samuel's sacrifice,
Fierce lightnings issued from the skies,
In streams so rapid and so dire,
The firmament seem'd all on fire:
And then such thunders roll'd abroad,
As ne'er burst from the throne of God;
Till Mizpah hill, in terrors wild,
Rock'd like the cradle of a child,
Then yawn'd, and swallow'd quick to hell
The enemies of Israel.
The remnant turn'd, and fled away,
In utter horror and dismay;
Without a blow they were cut down,
And all their country overthrown.—
There is but one thing on the earth
I hold as unexcell'd in worth;
It is (and who its scope may scan?)
The prayer of a righteous man.
And firmly as I trust in this
That I've a spirit made for bliss,
I do, that this divine of ours
Is trusted by the heavenly powers."

The Lord of Skye sprung from his chair,
And waving both his arms in air,
Thus said, in loud impassion'd twang:
"What boots this starch'd and stale harangue?
Has this old driveller of the Isle
Made canting monk of old Argyle?
If so, I boldly would suggest
To shun their counsel as a pest.
Who deems the chiefs of Albyn's reign
Of dogged churl can bear the chain,
Or stoop their lineage to disgrace?
Let bedesman keep to bedesman's place;
Stick to his bedework and his beads,
His crosiers and his canting creeds;
For should he more, or say I wis,
That Donald Gorm is that or this,
Or small or great, or weak or strong,
Or meek or proud, or right or wrong,
By the dread soul of Selma's king,
The dotard from the rock I'll fling!"—
The nobles answer'd with a smile,
And sided all with old Argyle.

"But where is good Columba gone?
Why has he left the tottering throne
In time of trial and of woe?"
I hear thee ask, and thou must know,
Fair maiden, patroness of mine,
As far as I, of his design.

That very night the truce was made,
After the saint his prayers had said,
In lonely cell his couch he chose,
Not for the slumbers of repose,
But that no worldly listening ear
His communings with God might hear;
And there he hymns to Jesus sung,
Till utterance died upon his tongue,
And sleep her genial unguent shed
Soft round the good man's hoary head.
Then all his visions were of bliss,
In other climes and worlds than this.

That night to him a vision came,
Like form of elemental flame,
That seem'd some messenger of grace,
But yet it wore a human face,
With lineaments the saint had seen,
But in what land he could not ween.

"Dost thou remember me?" it said.
Columba raised his reverend head,
And sore his memory did strain
At recollection, but in vain:
But the bright shadow, he could see,
Some semblage bore of royalty.

The phantom form of lambent flame
Waited a while, then nigher came,
And said, with deep and hollow moan,
In sorrow's most subduing tone—
"Woe's me, that thou remember'st not
Thy early friend! and hast forgot
That once to him thou vow'dst a vow,
'Twas for a child—Where is he now?
The first of Albyn's race supreme
Thou didst baptize in Jesus' name—
Where is he now? thou must him find;
For he of all the human kind
Is rightful heir, and he alone,
To Caledonia's ancient throne,
In which 'tis destined he must reign,
Else it is lost to Albyn's line.
Think of my words; the time is now;
Sacred and solemn was the vow.
If he appears not on this coast,
The nation's liberty is lost."

"Yes, I remember word and time,"
Columba said, in tone sublime;
"And sacred vow I made to thee,
And straight perform'd that vow shall be.
My early friend; and art thou come,
From thy far-off, eternal home,
To warn me of the times to be,
And of thy people's destiny?
I'll treasure up thy words and go,
And do what arm of flesh can do,
To bring that prince back to the land
Where he is destined to command.
To keep that vow I'll not decline;
But say, my friend, what fate is thine?
Where hast thou sojourn'd since thy death—
In heaven above, or hell beneath?
Oft have I dared of God to crave
Some tidings from beyond the grave;
Now they are come. For love of Heaven,
Be this unto thy servant given.
Tell me of all that thou hast seen
In heaven, or hell, or place between!"

"No!" said the spirit, raising high
His brow sublime with kindling eye,
And shaking locks that stream'd as bright
As the first rays of morning light—
"No!—Who to mortal thing would send
Tidings he cannot comprehend?
Till once the bourn of death is pass'd,
A veil o'er all beyond is cast,
That future things conceal'd may lie,
Hid from the glance of sinful eye;
For mortal tongue may never name,
Nor human soul presume to frame,
The scenes beyond the grave that lie
In shadows of eternity.
Concealment suits thy being best;
Then oh, in darkness let them rest!
When thou and I shall meet again,
Whether in land of living pain,
Or in the vales above the sky,
Then thou shalt know as much as I."

Columba, listening, paused in dread;
He look'd again, the form was fled!
'Twas that of Christian Conran gone,
Who once had sat on Albyn's throne.
A king of mighty name was he,
And famed for grace and piety.
He died. His brother seized his crown;
Eugene, a king of great renown.
And left it, as before defined,
Unto his daughter, lovely Hynde.
When Conran died, Columba then
Bore his young son across the main,
As he had sworn, with pious breath,
To Conran on his bed of death;
And gave the infant to the hand
Of Colmar, King of Erin's land.

That king, who ruled a people wild,
Was grandsire to the comely child;
And train'd that stem of royal name
To everything a prince became;
With fix'd resolve, at his own death,
To him his kingdom to bequeath.
Thus both the realms contented were,
With laws, with government, and heir;
And good Columba thought no more
Of vow that exile to restore;
For peace he cherish'd—peace alone—
'Mong all who bow'd at Jesus' throne.

But now this message from the dead
New light upon the future shed.
It was a dream; but it was truth;
A vow had issued from his mouth.
A sacred vow, that child to guard,
And use his influence revered,
Again to bring him to his own
And father's long descended crown.

Columba rose at midnight deep,
And roused his followers from their sleep;
Sailors and monks, a motley corps,
And straight they hasten'd to the shore,
Upheaved the anchor silently,
Unfurl'd the sails, and put to sea.—
"For Erin straight," Columba cried;
"At Colmar's court, whate'er betide,
I needs must be without delay;
No time be lost!—speed we away!"
His word was law; the vessel flew
Across the waters, waving blue,

With her dark sails, and darker train,
Like mournful meteor of the main.
Albyn's apostle's fervent prayer
With Heaven prevail'd, the winds were fair;
These, with the tides, and billows prone,
Seem'd all combined to bear her on.
With swiftness of the soaring swan,
She foam'd, she murmur'd, and she ran,
Till safe within Temora bay,
Like thing outworn, she leaning lay.

King Colmar, at an early hour,
Was looking from his topmost tower,
And saw the bark before the gale,
Speeding her course with oar and sail.—
"This visit bodes no good," said he.
"What brings these truant monks to me?
Either they come for some supply
To their new-founded sanctuary,
Or warlike force, to cross the main,
And prop their young usurper's reign.
They shall have neither, by yon sun!
Small good to Erin have they done;
For though this father bears a name
Of sanctitude and reverend fame
I've always found that horde a pest,
An ulcer, and a hornet's nest.
Their cause is lost ere they appear;
I'm quite in mood their suit to hear."—

Columba came—his message said—
Old Colmar smiled, and shook his head.
"The prince," said he, "is far from this,
Fighting my enemies and his.
But as well might you ask of me
My crown and kingdom seriously.
Whom have I now my foes to quell?
Or tame my subjects that rebel?
Or who at last my crown to wear,
But he, my kinsman and my heir?"

"Oh, King of Erin, hear me speak,
And see the tears on my wan cheek,
I seek the prince, his own to gain;
In Albyn his the right to reign.
And well thou know'st I made a vow,
Ere I consign'd the child to you,
All my poor influence to strain
To bring him to his own domain.
Now, such the crisis on our coast,
There's not one instant to be lost.
The powerful Eric of the north
Has drawn his heathen myriads forth,
Who, at this moment, lie around
Old Beregonium's sacred ground.
He beat our warriors on the coast,
And braves them as a nerveless host,
Threatening their force to overgo,
And lay the towers of Selma low,
Unless he's granted, without frown,
To wed their queen and wear their crown.
A transient truce is sign'd and seal'd,
Till adverse champions on the field
Shall meet, and strive in mortal game,
Each for his own and country's fame;
And whosoe'er the victory gains
Wins Albyn's queen and her domains."

Old Colmar paused, and turn'd him round,
His dim eye fix'd upon the ground;
And thrice he stroked his bearded chin,
While voices murmur'd him within.
His face was like a winter eve,
When clouds arise and billows heave,
And hinds look to the western skies,
Uncertain where the storm shall rise;
Or whether, mixing with the main,
It may not all subside again.

So stood the king, with ardour fraught,
The model of suspense and thought;
Then cross'd his arms upon his breast,
And thus the yearning sire address'd:
"Now, by my father's sword and shield,
If this be true thou hast reveal'd,
The prize hath in its scope a charm
That well befits a hero's arm.
There was a day, but it is past,
When this arm had not been the last
In such a high and martial play;
Though it had led my steps away
Through flood and fire, o'er shore and main,
To wastes beneath the polar wain,
Or lands that warrior never won,
Beyond the rising of the sun.
Gods! how the high and glorious theme
Lights this old heart with living flame!

"For some few days remain with me,
And as thou lists thy cheer shall be.
Of wine and feasting have thy fill;
But if perchance it be thy will
To fast and pray, by Heaven, I'll not
Baulk such devotion—not a jot!
With prince and nobles of my court
I must have speech of high import,
Of your demand, and then expect
An answer downright and direct."

"O sovereign liege, great is the need
For answer most direct indeed;
Else, ere we reach the Scottish shore,
The eventful combat may be o'er;
And I had message from the grave
That he alone our land could save."

"What! From the grave?—Pray thee, relate
How, where, and why this fact so late;
Came there a voice direct from God?
Or came it oozing through the sod,
Where purple flow'rets weep and bloom
Above the warrior's bloody tomb?

Say, was it so? For if it came
From grave of monk, 'tis scarce the same."

"'Twas in a dream the spirit spoke."

"Ha! In a dream?—'Tis all a joke!
I've had such dreams—such visions seen;
But what an idiot I had been
If I had dared on them rely!
But hadst thou seen, as oft have I,
Thy father's soul rise in his shroud,
From out the waste, like livid cloud,
In awful guise, without control
To wax and wane, and writhe and roll;
Approaching thee like giant grim,
With locks of mist and eyeballs dim;
And while the hairs crept on thy head,
And all thy frame shook like a reed,
If thou hadst heard a language run
Into thy soul, as I have done,
Then had I deem'd thy message sent
By some great power beneficent,
That rules around, above, below,
One whom I dread, but do not know.
But, as it is, it goes for nought;
I hope I hold it as I ought."

King Colmar turn'd him round, and left
The seer well nigh of hope bereft,
Grieving with tears for Albyn's fate,
Her destiny, and perilous state.
But leave we him, by rock and wood,
To kneel, and pray, and kiss the rood,
And follow Colmar to his hall,
Where stood the prince and nobles all.

He told them all full sullenly.
Prince Eiden danced in youthful glee,
And shouted till the armour rung
Against the wall, and sounding swung.
"Come, let us go! Come, my Cuithone,
And, Parlan, put your armour on;
If men on earth can beat us three,
Mightier than mortals they must be.
My heart is burning in my breast
To meet King Eric in the list:
Yes, brand to brand, and face to face,
Down goes the boast of Odin's race!
Come, let us haste, the time is near,
For sake of all to warriors dear!"

King Colmar's lip, with anger dumb,
Stiffen'd beneath his toothless gum;
And his white eye-brows scowl'd as deep
As snow-cloud o'er the wintry steep,
As up he strode to Eiden's eye,
Shaking his palsied hand on high.
"Thou babbler's brood of bounce and bang!
Thou lion's cub without the fang!
Think'st thou thy weetless warrior rage
Can be endured by sober age,
Well versed in deep affairs of state,
And by experience made sedate?
I tell thee, prince, in speech downright,
One foot thou goest not from my sight,
On such a raffle—made for fools,
The lowest of ambition's tools.

"Dost thou not see 'tis all intrigue,
A cursed and formidable league,
To wile thee hence, and take thy life,
On wild pretence of warrior strife?
There is no lord in Caledon
Who does not hope to fill thy throne,
And from high interest's sure to be
Thy sworn and mortal enemy.

"Then go not to that fatal strand,
Nor leave thy old protector's hand,
Who has no hope but in thy sway,
Nor comfort when thou art away.
Were it to fight our common foe,
As Prince of Erin thou should'st go,
With such an army in thy rear,
That force or guile I should not fear.
But to this game of fools to go,
And combat with thou know'st not who,—
I make a vow was never broke,
A promise that I'll not revoke,
By the great Spirit I adore,
One foot thou mov'st not from this shore!"

The prince a low obeisance made,
But his fair face was flush'd with red,
Which Colmar saw, and still his ire
The hotter blazed like spreading fire:
And sore he threaten'd, in his rage,
To chain the prince in iron cage,
Rather than suffer him to roam
Blustering about another home,
And raving of a thing so low—
A war of pedantry and show.

Straight to the seer then Colmar went,
Part of his jealousy to vent;
And neither sanctity of name,
Nor mien revered, could ward the same.
He told him roundly he was sent,
On base intrigue, to circumvent
The prince's progress to the throne,
And cut him off by guile alone.
Then talk'd, in haughtiness and wrath,
Of renegades from ancient faith,
Who, maugre all their humble airs,
Were ne'er to trust in state affairs.

Columba smiled, and with an eye,
That shone through tears, said fervently.
"O sire, withhold the rash resolve,
And vow, which thou canst not dissolve,
Say not thy Saviour to aggrieve.
In him dost thou not yet believe?"

"No, not one jot!" King Colmar said:
"I worship, as my fathers did,

The King of heaven omnipotent,
And yon bright sun, his vicegerent;
And when HE hides his face from me,
I kneel beneath the green oak tree.
But thou hast made the prince a fool,
By the weak tenets of thy school;
All founded on a woman's words,
Which ill with sovereignty accords.
I'll none of them! And, once for all,
Leave thou my shore, lest worse befall;
Nor ask thou that which is not fit—
To see the prince I'll not permit;
And if thou art not under way
Before the noontide of the day,
Perhaps a bed and sleep thou'lt find
Ill suiting thy ambitious mind."

Columba for forgiveness pray'd
On the old heathen's hoary head;
Then fled his fierce and angry glance,
Groaning in heart for the mischance,
That thus of hope his soul bereft,
And Albyn to destruction left.

The sable bark went out to sea,
Lashing and leaning to the lee;
But northward when she turn'd her prow,
She met the tide in adverse flow;
And the north breeze, in boastful sough,
Told them, in language plain enough,
That all their force of sail and oar
Would fail in making Albyn's shore.

To brave the king they had no mind,
But northward toil'd against the wind
Till midnight; then, at change of tide,
To a small creek they turn'd aside.
Of sailor monks there were but few;
And the dull lazy rower crew
Declared no farther they could wend,
Though that should prove their journey's end.

Unless in time of utmost need,
Columba held it high misdeed
To weary Heaven with earnest suit.
But danger now, and want to boot,
Obliged him humbly to apply
To his kind Maker, presently
Help to afford, by tide or wind,
Or by the hand of human kind.

The creek was all retired and bare,
Nor hamlet, hall, nor cot was there;
Yet one approaching they could see,
Ere the good man rose from his knee.
Down from the cliff the being strode,
Like angel sent direct from God,
To guide the father and his train
Back to their home amid the main.

The sun had just begun to flame
Above the coast of Cunninghame,
When this strange guest with caution drew
Toward our cowl'd and motley crew.
His step was firm, his stature tall;
Cunning, and strength, combined with all
The rudeness of the savage kerne,
Kythed in his hideous face altern.
His feet were sandall'd, and his coat
Made of the hide of mountain goat.
His dark locks, matted and unshorn,
Had ne'er been comb'd since he was born.
A russet plaid hung to his knee;
In sooth, a fearful wight was he!

Few were his words, when words were said;
But, ah! his looks compensement made—
Where terror, wonder, fierceness, rose,
By turns, on youthful face morose.
The monks at times upon him smiled,
Then trembled at his gestures wild.

Columba wist not what to do—
To ask his aid, or let him go.
He saw his followers ill inclined
Towards the rude uncourtly hind;
And some even whisper'd in his ear,
He was some fiend of other sphere.
Still, being at the moment given,
While aid had been implored from Heaven,
The sire conceived, that duty press'd
Some further knowledge of his guest.

He call'd him in before his face.
The youth advanced with giant pace;
While his elf locks, of dew to dry,
He wildly shook above his eye,
Folded his rude plaid o'er his knee,
Look'd at his leg of symmetry,
Next at his sword, that trail'd behind—
An oaken club without the rind—
Then stood in half averted way,
To listen what the sire would say.

He told his name, his age, his wit,
And all for which his strength was fit;
But in such terms, the sire was moved
To mirth, which ill his frame behoved.
MacUiston was the varlet's name;
He could not say from whence he came,
But he was born beyond the sea,
And there again he long'd to be.
"What sea?" was ask'd. He look'd askance;
And oh what pride was in his glance,
As he return'd, in giggling tone,
"Who ever heard of sea but one?"—
Oh, he could row, and he could sail,
And guide the rudder in the gale;
And he could make the vessel glide,
Wriggling against the wind and tide.
By his own tale, he was such man
As ne'er from jib to rudder ran;
But all their proffers of reward
He scorn'd, and held of no regard,

Till once they mention'd warrior brand,
When they arrived on Scotia's strand.
Then kindled the barbarian's eye,
He flew on board with rapturous cry;
And from his side his club he flung,
That in the fold of mantle swung,
Like sheathed sword; then, with a shock,
He wrench'd the hawser from the rock;
And ere the monkish crew had time
The Virgin's sacred name to chime,
The bark had rock'd upon her keel,
And from the beach began to heel.

"Do this!—Do that!" the savage roar'd,
And, heaving high his oaken sword,
He threaten'd sore, with growl and frown,
Whoe'er refused, to cleave him down.
The crew at first began to wink,
And from their posts essay'd to shrink;
But blows from tall MacUiston's tree
Made them apply most strenuously.
Close by the helm his post he took;
All shrunk from his offended look:
Whene'er he deign'd to sing or speak,
A smile would dimple rower's cheek,
But yet so gruffly and so grim,
It show'd how much they dreaded him;
For lazier train no leader knew
Than good Columba's sailor crew.

MacUiston by the helm stood fast,
And oft upon the sky he cast
A troubled look, and then again
Would fix it on the heaving main;
Then shake his black and matted hair,
And sing aloud some savage air.

At length he said, with careless joke,
And aye he stuttered as he spoke—
"My masters, we shall have a gale;
Stand by the beam, and reef the sail;
And he who fails, or handles slack,
Here's for the dastard vassal's back.

"Where art thou gone, thou angry Sun?
What crime hath poor MacUiston done,
That thus thou hid'st thy radiant form
Behind the darkness of the storm,
And leav'st thy servant to the sway
Of tempest on his wilder'd way?
No friend in whom he can confide;
No little star his path to guide;
No parent dear to say adieu;
Such poor MacUiston never knew!
Nothing but weak and feeble men,
Some darksome slaves from downward den.
But if, oh Sun, thy will it be,
I'll sacrifice them all to thee,
If thou thy servant's life wilt save
From bursting cloud and breaking wave:
Or show thy glorious face above,
If these are objects of thy love."

By chance, the words were scarcely spoke,
When through the low'ring darkness broke
A ray of sunshine wanly bright,
A transient gleam of livid light—
Like the last smile from beauty's eye,
Resign'd, and laid in peace to die;
That farewell glance, of smile and shiver,
Ere darkness seals the orb for ever.
So pass'd the sunbeam o'er the deck:
The savage then, with due respect,
Kneel'd down, and bow'd his matted head;
Then look'd around with awful dread.

"Now, friends," he cried—"for friends we are—
For toil, or death, let all prepare.
See where the hurricane comes on
With violence dreadful and unknown:
The western world is in commotion;
See how the clouds oppress the ocean;
And ocean, into vengeance driven,
With foamy billow scourges heaven.
Our bark will prove before its swing
Like fern upon the whirlwind's wing.
Wake the old carle you call the seer,
And ask him whereto we shall steer;
For toward sunrise we must fly,
With stern right in the tempest's eye:
A weather shore we needs must make—
It is our last, our only stake."

They ran the holy man to warn,
And told him of the hideous kerne,
That pray'd to heathen deity,
And brought the storm along the sea;
And every monk, in language strong,
Declared the arch-fiend them among.

Columba left his books and prayer,
With something of a timid air;
And moved his head above the deck,
Just as the masts began to creak.
He cast his eye before, behind;
Then cried, with troubled voice and mind,
"To Isla Sound! then we're at home"—
And pointed out the path of foam.

"'Twould be as wise to gaze and ponder
Upon the sky, and point us yonder,"
The savage said; but here is land,
Which we might win, if you command."—
To cast by south he turn'd her prow:
The rattling hail, and pelting snow,
Just then in furious guise began;
Loud gusts along the ocean ran;
And every sob the tempest gave
Spoke language of a watery grave.

"Stand by the beam, the main-sail under,"
MacUiston cried, in voice of thunder;
"Pull in—Let go—You dastard knaves,
Down with your heads into the waves!
If cross or head I note again,
I'll hurl the holder in the main.

Oh King of heaven! such furious storm
Did ne'er the ocean's breast deform!"

The bark flew on before the wind,
So like a thing of soul and mind,
It made the savage shout with glee,
"There goes the jewel of the sea!
Speed on! speed on, my bonny bark!
Behind the storm is rolling dark;
But if such glorious speed thou make,
Swift is the storm will thee o'ertake.
Oh, speed thou on, thou blessed thing,
Swift as the solan on the wing!
And if behind yon headland blue
Safely thou bear'st this fiend-like crew,
Then poor MacUiston, on his knee,
Shall offer sacrifice to thee;
For God's own blessed oak I know
His only emblem here below."

The monks quaked like the aspen slim,
And their dark looks grew deadly dim;
They deem'd each wave would them o'erwhelm.
With savage heathen at the helm,
Or fiend arrived from burning hell—
Their woeful plight what tongue could tell?

Yet still the bark her speed did strain,
For better never plough'd the main;
Till at the last, amid the roar
Of waves behind, and waves before,
By cataract and swell o'erthrown,
Adown she went with clash and groan.

"Hold by the cords!" MacUiston yell'd.
(Gods! how the monks and rowers held!)
"To see the bottom of the main,
We but descend to rise again."
Down went the bark with stern upright,
Down many fathoms from the light.
As sea-bird, mid the breakers toss'd,
Screaming and fluttering off the coast,
Dives from the surf of belch and foam,
To seek a milder, calmer home,
So sought the bark her downward way,
From meeting waves and mounting spray.

"Hold by the cords!" MacUiston call'd;
The monks obey'd, full sore appall'd.
Here rose a groan, and there a scream;
As down they bore into the stream,
But these were stifled in the brine,
As dived the sable brigandine;
And all was silent, save the gull
That mounted from the stormy Mull.

'Twas but a trice of lash and lave,
Till, on the top of mountain wave
The bark appear'd with flapping sail,
And dripping monks, and rowers pale,
Hanging on ropes all here and there,
Deaf, blind, and blurting with despair.

Again they heard MacUiston's tongue,
As loud he hallo'd out and sung,
"Stand to your tackle manfully;
Hold fast, and leave the rest to me!"

Again the waves roll'd o'er the deck;
But, be it told with due respect,
At this dire moment, who should call
From ridge of wave and tossing fall,
But the good seer! Not seen till now;
Wash'd from his hold, they knew not how,
Blinded with cowl of many a fold,
And wildly capering as he roll'd.
MacUiston caught him by the frock,
And held him steadfast as a rock;
Yet not one moment quitted post,
Though fearfully 'mong breakers toss'd,
Nor once turn'd round his eye, to scan
The plight of that most holy man,
But sung and shouted o'er the swell,
With maniac laugh and demon yell.

He saw what others saw at last,
That all the danger was o'erpast;
For this turmoil, this uproar dire,
Was at the point of Low Kintyre,
Where breaking waves, and stormy stir,
Still fright the coasting mariner.
Now were they breasting mountain steep,
Now plunging mid the foamy deep;
Anon they wheel'd from out the roar,
And swept along a weather shore,
Beneath the bank of brake and tree,
Upon a smooth and tranquil sea.

Columba stared in dread amaze;
The pallid monks return'd the gaze.
For him whose tall and giant form
Seem'd late the demon of the storm,
They now ween'd angel in disguise,
Sent down, to save them, from the skies;
And knew not how their guest to greet,
Or if to worship at his feet.

"Who *art* thou?" said Columba then,
"Thou best of angels or of men!
For if commission'd from above,
By the dear Saviour whom I love,
As guardian spirit of the sea,
I'll kneel, and pay my vows to thee."

The savage laugh'd with such good will,
That eagles answer'd on the hill,
Sail'd on the bosom of the cloud,
And neigh'd as fiercely and as loud.

"Ha! Worship me! That would be brave!
A homeless vagrant and a slave.
Worship the Sun, whose glorious road
Along'st the heaven was never trod;
Who frowns, and men are in distress;
Who smiles, and all is loveliness!

But if of better God you know,
In heaven above, or earth below,
Or seraph, saint, or demon grim,
Tell me, and I will worship him."

The holy sire, to tears constrain'd,
The doctrine of the cross explain'd;
The fall—the covenant above,
And wonders of redeeming love.
MacUiston listen'd silently,
His dark locks trembling o'er his eye,
Then said, it was his good belief
That Jesus was a noble chief;
For none could more for vassal's good,
Than for their sakes to shed his blood;
And for that cause, it was his mind
To follow prince so brave and kind.

"But yet the Sun of heaven," said he,
"Has been benignant god to me.
'Twas he who rear'd the roe-deer's brood,
And the young bristler of the wood;
The sprightly fawn, with dappled sides,
And leveret in the fern that hides;
The kid, so playful and so spruce;
And all for poor MacUiston's use.
'Tis he that makes the well to spring,
The dew to fall, the bird to sing;
And gives the berry of the waste
Its ripeness, and its savoury taste.
Oft with the rook and crow I've striven
For that delicious gift of Heaven;
Not elsewhere knowing when I first
Could quench my hunger or my thirst.

"'Tis he that rears the racy pea,
And spreads the crowfoot on the lea,
And makes the holy acorn grow,
The highest gift to man below:
'Tis he that makes the summer's prime,
The rapid storm, and wreathy rime,
Makes seas to roll, and rivers run—
MacUiston still must love the sun!"

Columba answer'd with a sigh
To that barbarian's language high;
And wonder'd at his strength of mind,
In such low rank of human kind,
That, like his frame, seem'd thing elate
Far o'er the peasant's lowly state;
Thence he resolved to win the youth
Unto the holy Christian truth.
When, in Dalrudhain's lonely bay,
They render'd thanks to God that day,
Than he, none show'd more humble frame,
Nor lowlier bow'd at Jesus' name.

Loud and more loud the tempest blew;
On high the fleeting lightnings flew;
The rain and sleet pour'd down so fierce,
As if the concave universe
Had been upset, or roll'd awry,
And oceans tumbled from the sky;
The heaven was swathed in sheets of gray,
And thunders gallow'd far away.

The seer, impatient to proceed,
Knowing his virgin sovereign's need,
Bade up that narrow frith to wend
(Now call'd Loch-Fyne) unto its end,
Resolved to cross the mountains dark,
And leave the sailors with the bark.
For a long night and stormy day,
They sailed that long and narrow bay,
And the next day at dawn of morn,
Mounted the pathless wastes of Lorn.

Columba and the savage rude
Enter'd alone that solitude;
For now he so admired the wight,
He scarce could bear him from his sight.
A dangerous path they had to scan,
For every petty torrent ran,
Pelting and foaming furiously,
As if to say, "Who dares come nigh?"
Then proved the kerne a trusty guide,
And many a time his strength was tried,
O'er rugged steep, and rapid river,
Bearing the old man safely ever.

But when to Orchay's vale they came,
So mighty was that moorland stream,
'Twas like an ocean rolling on,
Resistless, dreadful, and alone;
Its path with desolation traced,
The valley all one watery waste,
One foamy wave, thundering and smoking,
And mighty pines rending and rocking.

Columba gazed upon the scene,
So wild, terrific, and immane,
Until his lip grew pale as clay.
Said he, "I've journey'd many a day,
From hill of Zion, to the shore
Beyond which there is land no more;
But never look'd, in all my time,
On aught so marvellous and sublime.
That day the storm was at its height,
Was trial 'twixt the wrong and right;
The wrong has triumph'd, now I know,
And Albyn's rights are lying low;
Her chosen chiefs are fall'n and gone;
For it was destined, one alone
Could save the land that fateful day,
And he was kept by Heaven away.
Its will be done; for weal or woe,
We now must bend before the foe:
The Christian banner's in the toil,
The heathen riots in our spoil.

"I may be wrong, as grant I may;
But it is plain, that on that day
The storm hath all unequall'd been,
Such as no living man hath seen.

These are the signs of sinful deed,
And those are tokens that I dread.
The demons of the fiery reign
Have been abroad in Christ's domain,
Roused, by some powerful heathen spell,
From out the lurid vales of hell,
The face of earth and heaven to mar,
And hurl the elements in war.

"But—note me, youth—the time will come
That men shall stand, in terror dumb,
And see the Almighty's arm of power
Stretch'd forth in the avenging hour.
Yes, He will show to heaven and hell,
And all that in the earth do dwell,
From babe to prince upon the throne,
That He is God and He alone!"

But trust not all that prophets say;
The best may err and so may they.
Predictions are but ticklish gear,
Though spacious, logical, and clear;
Condensed, and penn'd in language strong:
Where once aright they're ten times wrong.
This sage experience hath me taught,
Whilst thou hast hooted, rail'd, and laugh'd.
Alack! the credit due to seers,
Too well is known to my compeers!

Our travellers gain'd the farther shore
Of dark Loch-Ow, by dint of oar;
And there the tidings met their ear,
Of deeds of darkness and of weir,
Which made the holy father weep,
And the rude boor to laugh and leap,
And shout, with joy and clamour vast,
"MacUiston finds a home at last!
A vagrant outcast though he be,
This is the land he loves to see!"

By Connel's tide they journey'd then,
And met whole multitudes of men;
Some fleeing to the forest land,
Some guarding firm, with sword in hand,
Each path and ford that lay between
Their fierce invaders and their queen.
For much had happ'd that I must tell,
And you must read if you do well.

PART FOURTH.

Oh fain would I borrow the harp of that land,
Where the dark sullen eagle broods over the strand,
Afar in his correi where shrub never grew;
Or mounts on bold pinion away from the view,
On beams of the morning to journey alone,
And peal his loud matin where echoes are none—
The harp of that region of storm and of calm,
To mount with the eagle, or sport with the lamb;
To warble in sunshine, in discord to jar,
And roar in the tempest of nature or war!
Of that have I need, and but that I'll have none,
To sound the memorial of old Beregon.

The city is crowded, each alley and hall;
Loud rattles the scabbard on pavement and wall.
The bow and broad arrow of Scythia are there,
And files of bright lances gleam high in the air;
They flash and they flicker, so dazzling and high,
Like streamers of steel on the fields of the sky:
But nigher survey them, how deep is their stain!
That redness is not with the drops of the rain;
Proud badges of battle, depart they must never,
But there as memorials fester for ever.
Our clans and the Norsemen nor beckon nor smile,
As file meets with column, and column with file;
Yet still there was bustle by night and by day,
And ne'er were the maids of green Albyn so gay:
But many a sad mother to Heaven appeals;
And from the old warior the groan often steals,
As from his high turrets he sees with despair
The black Bull of Norway pawing the air.
Queen Hynde waits the issue, submissive and dumb,
And noble King Eric with love is o'ercome.

King Eric came over, a conqueror proved;
A kingdom he wanted, a kingdom beloved:
The queen was an item he did not imply,
But the conqueror fell at the glance of her eye.
His proffer was made as a lure to the land,
For woman he loved not nor woman's command:
The name of a hero was all his delight:
His sword was a meteor unmatch'd in the fight;
The north he had conquer'd, and govern'd the whole
From Dwina's dark flood to the waves of the pole;
And ne'er in his course had he vanquished been,
Till now, by a young Caledonian queen.
But thou, gentle maiden, to whom I appeal,
Who never has felt what thou could'st not conceal—
Love's dearest remembrance, that brought with the sigh
The stound to the heart, and the tear to the eye—
O, ill canst thou judge of the mighty turmoil
In the warrior's bosom, thus caught in the toil!

For the queen kept the words of her father in view,
Who charged that, in secret no lover should sue;
And therefore bold Eric was still kept at bay,
For all his impatience and all he could say:
And this was her answer both early and late,
"The time is at hand that determines my fate:

Then he whose arm in battle is strongest,
Whose shield is broadest, or falchion longest,
And twice in the lists shall win the day,
I am his to claim and carry away.
But till that day all suit is vain—
In strict retirement I remain."

Ah princely Haco, woe for thee!
What hopest thou round these towers to see,
Which still thou circlest morn and even,
With cheek and eye upturn'd to heaven;
Or rather, to each casement high
In Selma's towers, for answering eye?
And thou hast seen it, though at more
Than fifty fathoms from the shore:
And who can eye of maiden fair
Read more than half way up the air?
The glance of love, the blushing hue,
Are lost amid the hazy blue:
But other signs—As, snowy veil
Rear'd high aloft like streamer pale;
A helmet waved in queenly hand;
A dazzling glance from gilded brand,
Whose point is northward turned away,
Where Eric's camp like city lay,—
These signals boded nothing good,
And scarce could be misunderstood.
A thousand times Prince Haco bow'd,
And humblest gratitude avow'd;
He kiss'd his hand, then kneel'd profound,
And thrust his sword's point in the ground,
In homage to that virgin queen,
For such he deem'd capricious Wene;
And *she* it was. But what she knew,
That thus such signals out she threw,
Or if 'twas all a freakish jest,
Nor friend nor foeman ever wist.

But as it was, it gave the alarm
Unto the prince to watch and arm.
His was a brave and goodly train,
The pride of Norway's stormy reign;
All youths on fame and honour bent,
And all of noble, proud descent,
Who the high heir of Eric's crown,
As path to fortune and renown,
Had follow'd with supreme good-will,
Claiming the post of honour still;
And, sooth, a comelier warrior train
Ne'er mounted wave of northern main.

To these he said, in secret guise,
With looks profound and shrewdly wise,
"I dread these coward Scots for ill;
There has been bustling on that hill,
As if some treachery were design'd,
Or some misprision in the wind:
Scouts have been running up and down,
From town to camp, from camp to town.
(For an encampment, strong and high,
The Scots had form'd on Valon-Righ.)
"'Tis meet that we should arm and watch,
Such violators first to catch,
If such there be. If I am wrong,
Our silent watch will not be long;
While, should we baulk some foul surprise,
Our fame to Odin's throne will rise."—
His warriors armed with youthful pride,
But laugh'd full mirthfully aside;
And wondered where their gallant prince
Caught such enormous sapience.

Meantime the troops of various climes
Met in the city lanes betimes,
And there they crowded, trading, bustling,
Till eventide, full rudely justling.
They met, they scowl'd—then rushing, mingled,
While their rude weapons jarr'd and jingled.
Few words were changed for ill or good;
For why? They were not understood:
But many brazen looks said plain,
"Friend, you and I may meet again!"

In short, throughout each Highland clan
A spirit most indignant ran.
They could not brook their foes to see
Parade their streets unawed and free;
And from their cliff-borne camp they view'd
The march of these barbarians rude
Beneath their feet from day to day,
Like tigers growling o'er their prey.

Nor wanted there the chiefs among
Some fiery heads that, right or wrong,
Would blow this breeze into a storm.
First of these chiefs was Donald Gorm,
Whose spirit, like the waves that roar
For ever on his stormy shore,
Was ne'er at ease by night or day,
But restless and perturbed as they.
Among the clansmen of his name,
Revenge was his perpetual theme,
Until so fierce his fury burn'd,
His sovereign's faith aside was spurn'd;
And, if to join him there was none,
He'd break the truce and fight alone!

"We'll go," said Donald, "in the night,
And seize this king of boasted might;
And first we'll bind him heel to head,
And bear him to our rock with speed;
And then we'll turn, and kill, and kill,
And spoil and ravage at our will!
That cumbrous host we well may dread,
With doughty Eric at its head;
But, rend that moving spring away,
And down it falls the spoiler's prey.
What boots it me a maiden's vow,
Vouchsafed I see not why, nor how?
If Donald this achievement grand
Performs by dint of shield and brand,
He reigns the King of fair Scotland!"—

"God bless the mark!" said every tongue,
And every sword on buckler rung.

King Eric's camp was scanned with care,
For sundry spies went sauntering there;
But so it happ'd that Haco's tent
Surpass'd the king's in ornament.
The prince's proud battalions lay
Round his with streamers soaring gay,
And golden crests, and herald show;
So that the spies went to and fro,
Staring aghast; then back they sped,
And, with sagacity inbred,
Declared, and swore, with gaping wonder,
That all the kings of the earth were yonder!

This was a prize, we may suppose,
Too rich for Donald Gorm to lose:
So straight was pass'd the order high,
That all the men of Mull and Skye,
And Moidart too, themselves should dight
In arms at dead hour of the night,
And follow where their chief should lead,
To enterprise of glorious meed.

The harp had ceased in Selma's hall,
And from her towers and turrets tall
No glimmering torch or taper shone—
For they had died out one by one,
Like fading stars, whose time was spent
Above the airy firmament.

Many a bard on Valon-Righ
Had sung his song of victory,
And gone to rest—or converse hold
With spirits of the bards of old.
The cymbal's clang, the bugle's swell,
The trumpet's blare, the bagpipe's yell,
Had ceased, and silence reign'd alone
Around the skirts of Beregon,
Where thousands lay, stretch'd on the soil,
Panting for battle and for broil.

But Donald Gorm had other scheme
Than thus on battle clang to dream:
He panted for the waking fight,
The blood and havoc of the night;
The silent rush on prostrate foe;
The stroke, the stab, the overthrow;
Their mortal terror, flight, and thrall,
And captive king—the best of all!
A thousand times, with grin and growl,
Did Donald curse the minstrel's howl;
Then roll'd him on his russet floor,
And railed against the lagging hour.
For every minute in its flight,
From evening till the noon of night,
Was fetter laid on Donald's might.

The hour arrived, as hour must come
To those that dread it for their doom,
As well as those who for it long—
And Donald's men, in phalanx strong,
Moved from the cliff around the steep
With swiftness and in silence deep.
Then Haco's watcher by the tarn
Straight hasted back, his prince to warn;
And found him and his troop prepared,
Couch'd on their arms, and keeping guard,
Hid in the heather and the brake,
Alongst the road the Scots must take.

Down came the Skye-men like a torrent,
Foaming, and muttering terms abhorrent;
Furious they came, with whirl and crush,
As midnight tides through narrows rush;
Or, when the storm is at the sorest,
Like wild bulls rushing from the forest,
With grinding hoof, and clattering horn,
And hollow humming as in scorn;
So rushed this phalanx multiform,
Led by the headlong Donald Gorm.

The front bore on swift as the wind,
But Haco's gallants closed behind;
And Donald's rear was levell'd low,
As fast as blow could follow blow.
His front pour'd on from tent to tent,
And robb'd and romaged as they went;
While those behind, without a blow,
Were chased and routed by the foe.
Right over ditch, and foss, and fen,
Was Donald borne by his own men;
For all his boast of warrior deed,
He ne'er got blow at foeman's head.

O Donald Gorm, hard fate is thine,
Exposed to punishment condign!
The truce is broke, and thou hast lost
One-fifth of all thy gallant host.
The daring deed thou canst not hide;
Thy kinsmen vanish'd from thy side,
And shame imprinted on thy brow—
Ha! Donald Gorm, what think'st thou now?

To-morrow all will be in flame,
And only thou must bear the blame;
For thou hast dared thy country's troth,
Thy sovereign's honour, and her oath,
Thus rashly, rudely, to deface;
And all for nought but deep disgrace.
Over thy head there broods a storm
Will blast thy honours, Donald Gorm!

But one thing yet thou dost not know:
Thou hadst to deal with generous foe,
Who sorrow'd at thy rash ado—
A hero, and a lover too;
Who dared not this thy deed proclaim,
Lest royal Hynde should bear the blame.

When past was all the hasty fray,
And Donald Gorm thus chased away;
And not one son of Norway miss'd,
Excepting Odin's sacred priest,
Whom Donald's men had caught asleep,
And hurried off unto the steep—

They deem'd him chief of high command,
Some ancient lord of Scania's band;—
When fled, I say, that headlong force,
Prince Haco call'd his counsellors.
"My gallant friends," said he, "I must
Rejoice to find in whom I trust.
This night you've shown, with courage true,
What youths of noble blood can do,—
Have saved our sovereign's sacred life,
And crush'd at once a dangerous strife.
Now, trust me, we'll more credit win
By hushing this with little din,
Than, by ostent and fulsome boast,
To break the truce with Albyn's host,
And lose at once the glorious right
Of gaining all by heroes' might.
By secret trust full well I know
The treachery bred with private foe,
That gave us chance thus to rebel.—
This thing I know, but dare not tell.

"Then let us strip these savage slain,
And sink their bodies in the main;
And pass the whole with answer brief,
As enterprise of robber chief—
A trivial thing, of no regard,
Unsuiting honours or reward."—
Each gallant thought as Haco did,
Although his motives still were hid.

The slain were heap'd upon a team,
And in the sea, to sink or swim,
Their bodies hurl'd without delay;
And all was o'er by break of day.
Then such a stir arose at dawn—
Torrents of blood like rivers ran;
But none could tell with whom the blame,
Or whence the purple deluge came.
Amazement fill'd the Norway men;
They gather'd round in thousands ten,
Until the king all patience lost,
And call'd a muster of his host;
No one was miss'd in all the lists,
Save one of Odin's sacred priests!

King Eric, as a monarch brave,
Of priestcraft was the very slave.
This omen dire his soul oppress'd;
He caught the terror of the rest,
And orders gave, in sullen mood,
For sacrifice of human blood.

Haco was grieved; for in that rite
He had no trust—took no delight;
And therefore told all that had pass'd
Unto the king, from first to last;
But chiefly dwelt on signal seen
From casement of the Scottish queen.

Now hush'd were Eric's false alarms:
He caught his nephew in his arms;
For his big heart impetuous strove
With throes of glory and of love;
And thrice he bless'd his hero young,
Who thus withheld the blabbing tongue
From telling of a deed of fame
That added lustre to his name;
Then said, "No favour he could crave,
That, as reward, he should not have."

The prince of this laid hold, and said,
"My king and uncle, then I plead,
That I to-morrow be allow'd
The honour and distinction proud,
Within the lists with thee to stand,
A champion for my native land.
And thou in Haco's deeds shalt trace
The might of Odin's heavenly race."

The king now frown'd in sullen mood,
Nor tried his promise to elude.
Generous, as absolute in sway,
And downright as the light of day,
He all at once, in terms uncouth,
Reproved the madness of the youth:—

"Thou tendril of a rampant plant!
Darest thou to ask, or I to grant,
A thing that throws from my right hand
The glory of my native land?
What would my well-tried champions say,
Were I to fling such prize away,
And all our soaring hopes destroy,
For the wild frenzy of a boy?
Thy rash, fond aim full well I see—
Thou think'st the choice will fall on thee.
Dare not to raise such lofty looks;
Eric but ill a rival brooks;
And thus to sacrifice his all,
He may not, and he never shall."

"My liege, I had your sacred word,
Given fully, of your own accord;
I ween'd on that I might rely:
Can Odin's son his troth deny?
I claim it; and to-morrow stand,
To win or fall at thy right hand.
Thy word is given; if broke it be,
By Thor, the breaker fights with me!"

"Haco, thou art a noble stem,
That well should brook the diadem.
My sacred word I must fulfil,
Though grievously against my will.
By one rash promise I am cross'd,
And all my fame in battle lost.
How dare I in myself confide
With such a stripling by my side?
For should'st thou fall, or wounded be,
Farewell to Eric's victory!
But at the hour the heralds name,
Come, and the post of honour claim
As right of thy illustrious line:—
My word is pass'd, and it is thine."

Turn we to Donald of the Isle,
In sad dilemma placed the while;
To censure subject for th' abuse
Of sovereign's faith, and broken truce.
He kept his place in outer ward,
To fight with friend or foe prepared;
And much he wonder'd when he saw
The armies mix, as if no flaw
Or breach of contract had been known:
Still Donald kept his hold alone,
Till Eric's muster-roll was o'er,
And freedom reign'd as theretofore.

"'Tis strange," said Donald, "should this breach
And foul defeat the throne not reach.
It would appear there is no blame
Attach'd to queen's or liegeman's name.
Therefore I judge it best at once
The daring outrage to renounce;
And prove it, swear it though they should,
Deny it all through fire and blood."

"Dear master, know, your gallant men
Amid King Eric's camp lie slain."

"There let them lie; I'll flatly swear
They are not mine, nor ever were."

"Your clan is short: what will you say,
When call'd out on a muster-day?"

"I'll say, the men of Mull are gone
To fetch supplies of venison;
To see their dames, and shun the strife;
And all have forfeited their life."

"The priest of Odin, in our thrall,
Will broad disclosure make of all."

"Were he the devil's priest array'd,
One whom I more than Odin dread,
I'd let him blood, and make his bed
Full fifty feet below my tread,
Rather than he should blab disgrace
On great M'Ola's royal race.
My fathers had one liberal form,
Which stands unbroke by Donald Gorm—
It is, that neither old nor young.
Nor oath pronounced by human tongue,
Shall e'er a rest or bearing find
Between his honour and the wind.
Come, and the secret thou shalt know,
How the old dotard brooks the blow."

The chief and bard together went
In to the priest, with foul intent:
The old man rested on the floor,
With lip of scorn, and look demure:
His ankles were by withe entwined;
His arms were cross'd and bound behind;
His grisly beard seem'd scarce terrene—
It flow'd, like Centaur's shaggy mane,
Far o'er his girdle crimosin,
And quiver'd to his palsied chin.
A portrait of majestic scorn
Was that old heathen priest forlorn,
With eye fix'd on his galling yoke,
And leaning calmly to the rock.

"Father, full froward was the fate,
That cast thee in this captive state,"
Said Donald, with affected grief;
"But here comes one to bring relief:
Since mighty Odin hides his face,
And there's no other eye of grace,
This boon thy Odin sends to thee—
A thirsty brand to set thee free!"

"Beware, thou sanguine, savage chief,
Slave to a new and fond belief!—
Beware how thou upliftest sword,
Or utter'st rash or ruthless word,
Against the lowest holy guide
To Odin's service sanctified.
Know'st thou who measures mortal age?
Who love's the battle's lofty rage
And riots mid the overthrow,
In wreaking vengeance on each foe?
Even He, whose servant for his sin
Lies chain'd thy hateful power within.
Then be thou ware, the crime eschew,
Nor do a deed thou sore shalt rue."

"Speak, Rimmon, bard of Turim's hall;
What think'st thou of this heathen's fall?"

"Thou lord of that romantic land,
The winged isle, of steep and strand;
And all the creeks of brake and fern,
Those pathless piles, so dark and dern,
That stretch from Sunart's sombre dell,
To Duich's heights of moor and fell;
Thou stem of royal seed—nay, more,
Son of an hundred kings of yore!
Unto thy servant deign regard;
Woe to the chief that slights his bard!

"I've heard an adage in my time,
A simple old Milesian rhyme,
Which bore, that, whatsoever god
Was worshipp'd all the world abroad,
From him that reigns in heaven alone,
Unto the gods of wood and stone—
That, still among each erring crew,
These gods should have a reverence due;
Because, in offering insult there,
A nation's feelings injured are;
And man's deep curse, when insults move
His sacred feelings to disprove,
Is next to that of God's above.
I say no more; but that I've found
These ancient sayings often sound."

Donald look'd down with dark grimace,
And primm'd his mouth, and held his peace;

And rather seem'd disposed to show
Relenting heart o'er prostrate foe.
But as imprudence in th' extreme,
Or dire mischance (a gentler name),
Suggested, the old priest began
To brave the spirit of the man;
And his o'erbearing pride defy,
By brief and threatening prophecy.

"'Tis known," said he, "o'er all the lands
Where Odin's heavenly sway expands,
That whosoever dares enthrall
The meanest guide unto his hall,
Or move a tongue his faith to upbraid,
Or hand against his sacred head,
That sinner's blood shall first be spilt
Of all his kindred's, for his guilt.
Therefore I dare the whole decrees
Of those who bow to oaken trees;
Or to the dazzling God of Day;
Or moon, that climbs the Milky Way;
Or to that God, mysterious, mild,
That died and lived, the Virgin's child—
I dare you all by curse unheard,
To wrong a hair of this gray beard;
Or down to Lok the caitiff goes,
The first of Odin's fated foes."

"So be the offence and the reward!
Thou speak'st to one that ne'er was dared,"
Said Donald, as he rose amain,
Trembling with anger and disdain;
And ere his bard a word could say
His master's vengeance to allay,
Cursing and foaming in his rage,
Sheer to the belt he clove the sage:
To either side one half did bow;
His head and breast were cleft in two;
An eye was left on either cheek,
And half a tongue, to see, and speak.
Oh, never was so vile a blow,
Or such a bloody wreck of woe!

Old Rimmon bow'd upon his knee;
And, that such sight he might not see,
Shaded his eyes with his right hand,
And pour'd forth coronach so grand,
O'er the old stranger's mournful fate
That Donald Gorm became sedate;
And soften'd was his frown severe,
To stern regret and sorrow drear.
But his stout heart not to belie,
He dash'd the round tear from his eye;
Then turn'd, and wiped his bloody glaive
And bade to dig the heathen's grave
Far in the bowels of the hill,
And with huge rocks the crevice fill,
That forth he might not win at all,
To blab in Odin's heavenly hall:
For, sooth, whate'er was doom'd to be,
He would that boisterous deity
Might lay his bloody guerdons by
For those who own'd his sovereignty.
Sore trembled Turim's ancient bard,
For the rash deed his lord had dared;
And, the transgression to redeem,
Sung a most solemn requiem.

Of Donald's nightly overthrow
No note was taken by the foe;
For, yielding to the generous prince,
King Eric slyly blink'd the offence.
Those strangers both were sway'd by love;
And hoped before the queen to prove
Their heroism, and matchless might,
And claim unto her hand by right.
But either mighty Odin heard
His dying servant's last award,
Or some all-seeing righteous eye
Beheld the ancient father die.

To Eric's tent that night were call'd,
Priest, prophet, patriarch, and scald;
And thence were heard, in thundering jar,
Loud anthems to the god of war;
And when the orisons were said,
And victims on the altar laid,
And rose the frenzy to the full,
With cup drunk from an enemy's skull;
Then blood was dash'd on all around,
As text, or omen, to expound;
And that, survey'd with much grimace,
Boded success to Odin's race.

Again the frenzied song of war
On the night breeze was borne afar,
Till, on the dark and gelid rock,
The drowsy cormorant awoke,
And, moved by wonder and dismay,
Scream'd out in concert with the lay.
Some sentinels that hovered nigh,
On the north cliff of Valon-Righ,
Descended softly to the plain,
And overheard the closing strain;
And thus it ran, the roundelay,
As near as Scottish tongue could say:—

Song.

Veil up thy heaven
From morning till even,
With darkness thy throne surrounding,
Whenever thy wrath
At the foes of our faith,
Thou showest in gloom confounding.

Roll up the thunder,
Thy right hand under,
And the snow and the hail up treasure;
And gather behind
The tempest of wind—
All weapons of thy displeasure.

Dreadfully pouring,
Rending, and roaring,
Send them with vengeance loaden,
That all below
May tremble to know
There's none so mighty as Odin!
There's none so mighty as Odin!
There's none so mighty as Odin!
That all below
May tremble, and know
There's none so mighty as Odin! &c.

The combat-day arrived at last,
And with it congregations vast
Of maidens, youths, and aged men,
From isle, from dale, and Highland glen;
All panting, burning, to survey
The deeds of that eventful day.
And every group, disputing, came,
Who were the warriors first in fame:
For every clan avow'd its head
Unmatch'd in might and warrior deed—
One 'gainst a world to throw the gage,
The master spirit of the age.
Full plain it was to eye and ear,
That chose to see, and chose to hear,
That no three lords the land could call,
Would satisfaction give to all.

That morning rose in ruddy hue
So bright, that all the fields of dew,
The gleaming mountains, and the wood,
Appear'd one mighty waste of blood;
Even the slow billow of the main
Appear'd to heave and roll in pain—
A clammy, viscous, purple tide,
That murmur'd to the mountain side,
And broke, with harsh and heavy groan,
Upon the beach of Beregon.
The sages look'd with wistful eye
Upon the flush'd and frowning sky;
Then, on the purpled earth and sea,
And sigh'd a prayer internally.

But scarcely had the morning's prime
Flamed o'er the mountain's top sublime,
Ere sable shades began to spread,
And mingle with the murky red;
The sun glared through a curtain gray
With broaden'd face and blunted ray;
And short way had he left the rath
Upon his high and gloomy path,
Till nought appear'd to human sight
But a small speck of watery light,
That seem'd above the rack to fly,
Careering through a troubled sky.

Dark and more dark the morning frown'd;
At length the shadows closed around,
Until the noontide of the day
Look'd like a twilight in dismay.
'Twas like that interval of gloom
'Twixt death and everlasting doom,
When the lorn spirit, reft away
From its frail tenement of clay,
Is forced through wastes of night to roam,
In search of an eternal home—
That space of terror, hope, and dole,
The awful twilight of the soul.

Alas! what earthly anxiousness
Resembles such a pause as this?
But mortal tremor and alarm,
For the success of foeman's arm,
And for the congregating gloom,
That almost threaten'd nature's doom,
Were never moved to wilder scope
Than on that day of fear and hope.

In Eric's council was no flaw,
His will was rule, his word was law;
But in the Scottish camp there grew
A furious general interview.
There was no lord, nor chief of name,
Who put not in conclusive claim,
As his the right the brand to wield
Upon the glorious combat-field.
After great heat, in proud deport,
With stern arraignment and retort,
Resource or remedy was none,
But that of casting lots alone;
A base alternative, 'twas true,
But that, or battle, nought would do.
The lots were cast with proper form,
And fell on Mar, and Donald Gorm,
And Allan Bane, of wide command,
The goodliest knight in fair Scotland.

Mar's name was called throughout the crowd;
The men of Dee hurra'd aloud;
But those of Athol and Argyle
Look'd to the earth, with hem and smile;
While Moray lads, with envy stung,
Cursed in a broad unfashion'd tongue.

Brave Donald Gorm was not proclaim'd.
Gods, how the men of Morven flamed!
And those of Rannoch and Loch-Ow
Pull'd the blue bonnet o'er the brow,
And mutter'd words of scorn and hate,
Lamenting Albyn's hapless fate;
While through the clans of Ross there pass'd
A murmur like the mountain blast.

Each neighbouring clan was moved to scorn,
That such a chance from it was torn
Of royal sway, and warrior boast,
And given to those they hated most.
While distant tribes forbore to foam,
Pleased that it came no nigher home.

But when the name of Allan Bane,
Lochaber's calm and mighty thane,

Was call'd, there was no grumbling sound,
Nor aught but plaudits floated round.
The gather'd thousands seem'd to feel,
That Heaven had chosen for their weal;
For lord was none, in sway or fame,
In all the land, of equal name.

The ring was form'd above the bay,
Where Eric's ships incumbent lay;
Its circle measured furlongs ten,
One half inclosed by Norway men,
While all the Scots rank'd on the lea,
Between the city gate and sea;
And 'twixt the hosts, from east to west,
Strong ramparts, lined with guards, were placed.

The seven towers of Beregon
Were clothed and crowded every one.
High soaring o'er the sordid strife,
Unmeasured piles of mortal life,
Breathing, and moving frown'd they there,
Like cloudy pyramids of air.

Both friends and foemen turn'd their eyes
To these pilasters of the skies,
And almost ween'd the living towers,
The altars of the heavenly powers;
The tabernacles of the skies,
Where angels offered sacrifice,
With victims heap'd of shadowy forms
Above the pathway of the storms,
Up render'd from some dread abode,
The foes of men and foes of God;
And there piled for some dire cremation,
Some final, horrid immolation.

The whole of that momentous scene
Was such, as on this earth again
The eye of man can never see,
On this side of eternity.
The various nations arm'd and filed;
The thousands round on summits piled,
Of rock, of ravelin, and mast;
The sky with darkness overcast;
And when the trumpet's rending blare
Bade champions to their posts repair,
Ten times ten thousand panting breasts
Were quaking, yearning, o'er the lists;
Ten thousand hearts with ardour burn'd;
Ten thousand eyes were upward turn'd,
Trying to pierce the fields of air;
But there was nought but darkness there!
What could they do but mutter vow,
And turn their eyes again below?

King Eric and his champions twain
Enter'd the lists the first; and then
Appear'd the Scottish heroes three,
Arm'd and accoutred gallantly.
But when they met to measure swords,
And change salute in courteous words,
From the Scots files there rose a groan;
For far, in stature and in bone,
The Norse excell'd; so far indeed
That theirs appear'd of pigmy breed.

The heroes measured sword and shield,
Then to their various stations wheel'd;
And just when ready to begin,
Prince Haco sprung like lightning in,
Kneel'd to the king, and made demand
To fight that day at his right hand,
As his the right by heritage.
The champions boded Eric's rage,
And gazed at Haco. But anon
King Eric bade the knight begone
From his right hand, with kingly grace,
And the young hero took his place.
A mighty clamour rent the air,
And shook the loaded atmosphere;
He was, forsooth, a comely sight,
In golden armour burnish'd bright,
And raiment white, all glittering sheen
With gems of purple and of green.
With face so fair and form so tall,
So courteous, and so young withal,
He seem'd, amid the multitude,
Like sun-beam through a darksome cloud.

Among the shouts that scaled the shower,
A shriek was heard from Selma's tower.
Far upward Haco turn'd his eye,
And saw, far in the hollow sky,
A female form of radiant white
Upheld, and fainting with affright;
But soon she waved a snowy veil:
The prince's cheek grew red, then pale;
And with rash hand, and streaming eye,
He heaved his golden helmet high.
King Eric gave him stern reproof,
And warn'd him to his post aloof;
But his fond heart, with burning glow,
Was roused to more than man might do;
He trod on air; he grasp'd at fame;
His sword a meteor seem'd of flame.

The king was match'd with lordly Mar;
And Allan Bane with Osnagar,
A Dane of most gigantic form;
And the brave prince with Donald Gorm.
The marshals walk'd the circle round,
Survey'd the lists and vantage ground,
Then raised a signal over head,
The baleful flag of bloody red.
The trumpet sounded once; and then
Bugle and tabor roll'd amain
O'er all the host with rending swell;
Till slumbering echoes caught the knell,
And, calling to the mountain side,
Proclaim'd the combat far and wide.

The trumpet gave the second boom;
Again the clamour rent the gloom!
It gave the third: no murmur ran;
No sound moved by the breath of man

O'er all that collied,[1] countless throng;
For trembling feelings, fierce, and strong,
Oppress'd them all. Blench'd was each cheek,
And lip, that moved, but durst not speak.

The triple combat then began;
That instant man was match'd to man;
And at that very moment flew
From out the cloud the lightning blue;
The thunder follow'd, and the hail
Came like a torrent with the peal,
Straight in the faces of the three
Who fought for Albyn's liberty.
The priests and scalds of Scania raised
The stormy hymn, and Odin praised;
But Albyn's thousands, blinded quite
With hail, and sleet, and glancing light,
To covert fled in dire dismay,
Trembling and faltering by the way;
All ignorant of what befell,
And asking news which none could tell.

But not the wrath of angry heaven,
The storm with tenfold fury driven,
The forked flames, with flash and quiver,
The thunder that made earth to shiver,
Could daunt the courage of the brave,
Who fought for glory or the grave.

No stately marshal was allow'd,
Nor umpire, verging from the crowd,
To meddle with the mortal strife;
Each hero fought for death or life.
Few words on either side were spoke,
To daunt opponent or provoke;
For why? the storm so fiercely jarr'd,
They neither could be said nor heard.
Their weapons met with clanging blows,
And high from helm and buckler rose.
Mar lost his ground, as Eric press'd;
But calmly still the king regress'd;
With foe before, and foe behind,
To quit his line he had no mind,
And vantage of the rain and wind.

'Tween Osnagar and Allan Bane
The fight was dreadful. But the Dane,
With every vantage of the field,
Eluded Allan's oval shield,
And pierced his shoulder to the bone,
Reddening his arm and hacqueton.
This roused the Scottish hero so,
That back he bore his giant foe;
And it was plain to every eye,
Though few there were that could espy,
That Albyn, in her Allan Bane,
Would suffer no dishonest stain.

Ha! mighty Donald of the main,
Why flagg'st thou on the battle-plain?
Why is thy bronzied cheek aghast,
And thy fierce visage overcast?
Can thunder's roar, or fire, or storm,
Appal the heart of Donald Gorm,
Who, till this hour, at danger spurn'd,
Whose sword in battle ne'er was turn'd?
No; but there had been boding sight,
Some dreadful visitant o'ernight!
And now the hero powerless seem'd,
And fought as if he slept and dream'd.

When Haco first met eye to eye
With the impetuous Lord of Skye,
One thought alone possess'd the host;
Even Eric deem'd his nephew lost,
And only kept proud Mar at bay,
To watch the issue of the day.
Haco strode up with giddy pace,
And shook his brand in Donald's face.
The day had shortly been, forsooth,
If such a fair and flexile youth
Had shook a gilded sword or spear
At that imperious islander—
Heavens! how the tempest's howling breath
Had heighten'd been by Donald's wrath;
Whereas he now to battle fared,
As if he neither saw nor heard.

Haco made play, and join'd, and sprung
From side to side, like galliard young.
Now on his golden shield he clang'd;
Now on his foeman's buckler bang'd;
Now back, now forward would he fly,
In hopes to catch a royal eye.
But all the feints he could perform
Were lost on drowsy Donald Gorm;
Though life and death were laid in stake,
He held his guard as scarce awake.

The prince grew reckless and surprised,
Thinking his foeman him despised;
And, pressing down that sluggish brand,
He closed with Donald hand to hand.
Then did a furious course ensue,
Of push and parry, hack and hew;
Until the prince, in sidelong bound,
Gave Donald's thigh a ghastly wound.
Then burst the chief's inherent ire
Forth like the blaze of smother'd fire.
Alas! 'twas bravery's parting qualm,
The rending blast before the calm;
The last swoln billow in the bay,
When winds have turn'd another way.

"Curse on thy wanton slight!" he cried,
"Thou gossip for a maiden's side!
And curse upon the wizard charm,
That thus hath chain'd M'Ola's arm,
Whose pristine might and majesty
Were framed to punish ten like thee!
Here's to thy foppish heart abhorr'd!
Ward, if thou may'st, this noble sword.

[1] Darkened, overshadowed.

Hence to thy ghostly charlatan,
And bear him back his curse and ban:
And say, that I'll requite it well,
In whate'er place he dares to dwell—
In earth, in cloud, in heaven or hell!"

Thus saying, Donald forward flung,
And at the prince his weapon swung
With back and forward sweep amain;
But only fought the wind and rain,
Or thing invisible to man.
He toil'd, he wheel'd, and forward ran;
But not one stroke, for all his fume,
So much as levell'd Haco's plume,
Or downward on his buckler rang,
Or made his golden helmet clang:
His rage seem'd madness in th' extreme—
The struggle of a frenzied dream.

The prince kept guard, but smiled to see
The wildness of his enemy;
At length, with flourish, and with spring
Forward, like falcon on the wing,
He pierced the raving maniac's side:
Forth well'd the warm and purple tide;
And, like an oak before the storm,
Down crash'd the might of Donald Gorm.
A shout from Norway's files too well
Proclaim'd the loss Scot dared not tell.

"True son of Odin!" Eric cried,
And rush'd on Mar with madden'd stride.
"Presumptuous lord! What thing art thou
That comest King Eric's ire to brow?
Would that I had (if such there be)
A score of Scottish lords like thee!
With dint of this good sword of mine,
I'd heap them all on Odin's shrine!"—
So saying, at one dreadful blow,
He shear'd the warrior's helm in two,
With lightning's force.—The Scottish lord
Lies prostrate o'er his bloodless sword.

By this time giant Osnagar
Was from his station borne afar;
And sore by Allan Bane oppress'd,
Heaved like the sea his ample chest;
His hand unto his weapon clave—
Scarce could he wield that weighty glaive.
He in his targe to trust began,
For blood o'er all his armour ran;
And, as he wore from side to side,
Most bitterly to Odin cried.
One other minute in the strife,
And Osnagar had yielded life;
But to that goal when Allan press'd,
Two other swords met at his breast.—
"Yield!" cried King Eric, "yield, or fall!"—
"I never did, and never shall!"
The chief replied.—But Eric's arm
Waved back his friends from further harm.

"Most generous king, I will not yield,
Nor living quit the combat-field:
Come one, come all, this arm to try—
Here do I stand, to win or die.
Shall it be told on Lochy's side,
That Allan Bane for rescue cried?"

King Eric smiled, and made reply:
"Thou bear'st thyself most gallantly;
We're three to one, and doubly strong;
But none shall gallant foeman wrong:
Then yield thee to a king this day,
Whose sword in battle ne'er gave way."

"For once it shall!" bold Allan cried,
And made a blow at Eric's side.—
"Hurra!" cried Eric joyfully;
"I'll trust this wight with none but me.
Keep all aloof, both friend and foe,
Till we two change a single blow.
His wayward will he needs must have,
Though he is one I fain would save."

Clash went the swords, the bucklers clash'd,
And 'gainst each other soon were dash'd;
But short the strife, ere Allan Bane
Lay stunn'd upon the slippery plain,
Bereft of buckler and of brand,
But without wound from Eric's hand.
He was no more in Eric's clasp
Than leopard in the lion's grasp.

The king upraised the wondering thane,
With soothing words and smiling mien;
Returned his sword, and, as a charm,
Bound golden bracelet round his arm;
Then, in a bold, impatient strain,
These words address'd to Allan Bane:—

"Thou art as stout and stanch a knight
As ever braved our northern might;
But know thou this (and when thou dost,
Thou know'st it to thy nation's cost),
In youth, before this beard was brown,
Or only waved a golden down,
I, from a child to battle bred,
Was forth to single combat led;
Before my eighteenth year, I say
Had clothed this chin, which now is gray,
Within the lists I had to fight
For life, before my father's sight.
I won, and of applause was vain.
I've fought a thousand times since then;
In southern climes have laurels won
Beyond the seasons and the sun;
I've journey'd all the world around,
Wherever fame was to be found;
Have fought with Frank and Turcoman,
With prince, with vizier, and with khan;
And though their painim creed I spurn'd,
This sword was ne'er in combat turn'd.

"The seventh day we fight again.
In triple combat, on the plain;
But as well may you challenge then
Great Odin, prince of gods and men,

Or brave that liquid fiery levin,
Red streaming from the forge of heaven,
Trying its power to countercharm,
As brave the force of Eric's arm.

"This tell the nobles of your land;
And say, I make sincere demand
Of them, ere more deray is done,
To yield the queen. I have her won.
I flinch not from my royal seal:
It is in friendship I appeal.
But should they wish again to just,
And in the second combat trust,
'Tis well; then henceforth I must claim
The guardship of the royal dame.
They have but choice 'twixt bad and worse;
I claim but what I'll take perforce.
One hour I wait return discreet—
The next I do as I think meet."

By that time Mar had breathed his last,
And Donald Gorm was nearing fast
The bourne of all the human race;
Yet, in his stern and rugged face,
There seem'd no terror, wrath, or teen,
Save at some being all unseen.
When Haco raised him to his knee,
He look'd aside most movingly,
And to the wind these words address'd—
He saw nought but the slaughter'd priest!—

"Ay, thou may'st stand, and smile, and beck,
With thy half head on half a neck;
M'Ola soon shall be with thee,
His sworn and subtile enemy.
Thou basilisk of burning spheres!
Thou, and thy hellish, damn'd compeers,
With dreams and visions of dismay,
And terrors of a future day—
With dreadful darkness, fire, and storm,
At last have vanquished Donald Gorm!
But some shall rue, since so it be:
Go to, go to—I'll be with thee."

The hero turn'd his beamless eye
Toward the grisly peaks of Skye:
Some thought unfathomed seemed to hover
His dark departing spirit over—
Of roaming on his mountain wind,
Swifter than hawk or dappled hind:
Of stag-hound's bay and bugles swelling,
And answering echoes bravely yelling;
But all was one distorted scene,
The vision of a soul in pain,
That trembled, neither bound nor free,
'Twixt time and immortality.
With that wild look it fled for ever,
From hollow groan, and rigid shiver—
From clenched hand, and writhing brow—
Eternal God!—What is it now?

PART FIFTH.

O come, gentle maiden
Of queenly Dunedin,
Array'd in thy beauty and gladdening smiles;
Thine the control I list,
Lovely mythologist!
Thine the monition that never beguiles.

Over the mountain wave;
Over the hero's grave:
Over the darkness of ages gone by;
Be thou my inquirer,
And holy inspirer,
And keenly I'll follow the glance of thine eye.

But, bowing before thee,
Far most I implore thee,
When rapt in the strain that I love beyond measure;
That theme so ecstatic,
Sublime and erratic,
The love of a maiden, the magnet of pleasure!

What were the sailor's joy,
Roll'd in his bavaroy,
Far in the gloom of the dark Polar Sea;
What were the warrior's deed,
Minstrel or monarch's meed,
What, without hope of approval from thee?

Thou gem of creation,
The world's admiration,
Thy mind is a mystery I cannot explore;
I'll love and caress thee,
Admonish and bless thee,
But sound the high tone of thy feelings no more.

The gray hairs of sorrow,
And dread of to-morrow,
Have bow'd down thy bard on his cold native lea;
Then list the last lay
Of the green bracken brae,
The song is a medley, and model of thee.

Queen Hynde's in her tower,
For the storm and the shower
Had driven the maidens within;
And shrouded the view
Of the anxious few
That yearn'd over the fates of their kin.

All trembling and pining,
The queen sat reclining,
She knew not what was befalling;
But she boded deep dismay,
For the shouts were far away,
And each sound through the storm was appalling.

One after one to the field she sent,
Who hasted away incontinent;
But out of the throng, the mire, and the rain,
No one return'd with the tidings again;
And the first that arrived was Allan Bane.
All sheeted in blood appear'd he there,
And his looks and his words were all despair.
King Eric's message in full he told,
And of his claim the queen to hold:
Then vouched the boast of his warrior slight,
As far inferior to his might;
For he said, that "enchanter's mighty charm
Had given that force into his arm.
The combat was lost; no power to deliver!
And so would the next, and the next for ever."

Perplexity reigned in every face,
As every rankling pang kept place
In various breasts; one there might see
Anger, regret, temerity,
Hope, fear, contempt, elation, shame,
And every passion tongue can name,
All crowded on a darksome scene,
With scarce a ray of light between.

As ever you saw, on winter eve,
When the sun takes a joyless leave,
Descending on some distant coast,
Beyond the waste of waters lost,
The ocean's breast all overspread
With shades of green and murky red,
With distant fields of sackcloth hue,
With pale, with purple, and with blue,
And every shade defined and strong,
Without one cheerful ray among;
And knew'st these spectres multiform,
The heralds of approaching storm:
So was it here. Proud Albyn's blood
Began to boil, the storm to brood;
Some blamed the preference by lot;
Nor were old jealousies forgot.
Some blamed the brave and wounded thane
Of brangle hurtful and insane;
And said, A thousand might be found
Would Eric beat, in Albyn's bound.
It was a scene of feud and dare,
As feudal councils always were.

Old Diarmid rose this feud to check—
His reverend age insured respect—
And thus he spoke: "My sovereign dame,
And noble maids, and chiefs of fame,
Hard is our fate, whate'er the worth
Of this bold wooer of the north.
This city of our fathers' names
In one short hour may be in flames,
And with the thousands of our kin
That now are throng'd its walls within,
Of every age, sex, and degree,
How dreadful would the sequel be!
King Eric's claim, confess I must,
Can scarcely be pronounced unjust;
'Tis only that for which he fought.
Else he has staked his all for nought—
And should he win again, 'tis clear
(And likely too from all we hear),
If we such claim should disallow,
He has no more than he has now.
Therefore I deem, in such a case,
To save our gather'd populace,
We must to Eric straight present
Some pledge, some great equivalent,
If such there be; but as for more,
I said but as I said before,
The moment with our queen we part,
Our country's freedom we desert."

"Forbid it, Heaven!" Queen Hynde replied,
"For me no warrior's hand be tied.
When I am gone, as go I must,
I in your patriot ardour trust,
That by your country's rights you stand,
Nor lose one jot for maiden's hand.
This hour I go, ere worse arrives,
To save my people's sacred lives."

One buzz of disapproval ran
Around the hall, from man to man;
And all prepared to take the field:
To sell their lives, but not to yield
Their youthful queen; as, doing so,
They stoop'd unto a foreign foe.

As wilder still the uproar grew,
And nought but havoc was in view,
The city crowded perilously,
No room to fight, nor yet to flee:
Confusion, ruin, crowds aghast,
Defeat, and conflagration vast,
The certain consequence to be
Of this their fierce fidelity.

In this dilemma came relief;
Not from the clan of distant chief,
From friendly prince, nor subject isle,
But from a maiden's witching wile!
The restless Wene, since she had seen
Prince Haco, sore perplex'd had been;
And much she long'd for some deray,
To throw her in that hero's way,
Whose youthful arm and sprightly form
Had cow'd the might of Donald Gorm;
And hence her mind was wholly bent
On being with her mistress sent,
An hostage to King Eric's tent.

Now, when she saw the proud resolve
Of Albyn's chiefs would straight involve
The land in trouble, toil, and woe,
And all her measures overthrow,
Forthwith she rose with seemly grace,
And all her majesty of face,
And proffer'd, for her mistress' sake,
Her place of royalty to take;

And on the instant to go thence,
In such an adverse exigence.

"Send me to Eric straight!" said she,
"In all the pomp of royalty;
With maids and pages at my beck,
Kneeling, and bowing with respect;
And loads of comfits, and of dress
Blazing in eastern sumptuousness.
His forward claim he may repent,
I'll queen it to his heart's content!
One only claim to make I choose,
Which as a king he can't refuse;
It is that, as a virgin queen,
My face by man may not be seen,
Until the seven days are outrun,
And Albyn's chiefs have lost or won.
This for my country's sake I crave,
Now trembling o'er her freedom's grave;
And then I yield me to his hand,
An hostage for my native land.
To plague that king I have a mind:
If he's not sick of woman kind,
And, ere the seventh day, driven insane,
My name no more is Wicked Wene!"

The courtiers smiled, as well they might,
And lauded much the maiden's sleight;
But sore they fear'd the plot would fail,
And do more mischief than avail.
Wene's form was slight, her stature small,
The queen's majestically tall;
And, worst of all, the king had seen
And held some converse with the queen.

Wene smiled, and bade them nothing dread.
She should be taller by a head,
Than Eric could of queenship guess;
She'd add one inch of wickedness,
And three of beauty, pride, and mind,
Should dazzle mighty Eric blind.
She'd swathe the braggart in amaze,
If not drive mad, in seven short days.

Queen Hynde embraced the elf, and said,
No mistress e'er had such a maid;
And if success this effort crown'd,
She would for ever be renown'd;
For future bards, in many a strain,
Would sing the deeds of beauteous Wene.
And when a lover she should choose,
Her sovereign would no boon refuse;
While all her interest she might claim
To win a lord of noble fame.

"Ohon an Banrigh!" sigh'd the elf:
"Preserve your interest for yourself,
My generous queen; for you may need
That and some more, in marriage speed.
For me, henceforth I'll use mankind
As I would do the passing wind—
To breathe upon, and bid it fly
Away from great important I!
Or to supply this ardent breast
With cooling laughter and with jest.
Interest! The proffer is sublime!
Come, let us go, we lose but time.
When from this presence I depart
In all the pomp of female art,
'Mid grandeur and respect to move,
I'll queen it mortal queens above."

All present own'd with earnestness,
There was no mode so safe as this,
Save for the danger of the maid,
Of which she nothing seem'd afraid.
The queen assured them that she knew
The cunning of the lively shrew
Too well from trial, to suspect
That what she said she'd not effect.
Forthwith a herald went with speed
To Eric at his army's head,
Prepared to bathe their weapons' rust,
And lay old Beregon in dust.
Eric, with generous love inspired,
Conceded all the queen desired,
And straight made preparation high
For this most lovely prodigy—
This queen, of frame and soul refined,
Surpassing all of human kind!

Eastward the storm its course had traced,
To roar amid the Grampian waste,
In one dark elemental stole
These everlasting hills to roll;
And in that deep impervious cloud
Were roll'd, as in a hellish shroud,
The hail, the thunder, and the flame;
And ghastly shades, without a name,
Holding them all in order due,
Prepared the outrage to renew—
To sport them all in wild excess,
And riot in the wilderness.

Soon as that cloud had pass'd away,
Forth issued Wene, like meteor gay,
With music pealing on the wind,
And troops before and troops behind;
Twelve pages, glancing all in green;
Twelve maidens, in their tartans sheen;
Twelve bards, who sung, in strains intense,
Their sovereign's great magnificence,
And deeds her ancestors had done,
Surpassing all beneath the sun.
All were sincere, you may believe't—
How oft poor minstrels are deceived!

In all the splendour of the morn,
The beauteous dame herself was borne
On high, a gilded throne within—
A lightsome, yielding palanquin;
Her form begirt with many a gem,
Her head with sparkling diadem;
A gauzy veil of snowy white,
Befringed with gold and silver bright,

Floated around her on the air,
Circling a form so passing fair,
So pure, so lovely, so benign,
It almost seem'd a thing divine.

Eric, array'd in warrior trim,
Surrounded by his nobles grim,
Came forth the royal dame to meet,
And with kind salutations greet.
Behind him shone a goodlier view—
Prince Haco and his retinue;
And he himself that train before.
Robed in the armour which he wore
That morn upon the sanguine field,
The golden helmet and the shield;
And in his youthful hand display'd
The golden hilt and bloody blade,
All saying, with full fond regard,
"See for your sake what I have dared!"
Oh how his ardent bosom pined
For one sweet glance, approving, kind,
Of the dear being he had seen,
And now his bosom's only queen!

Queen Wene approach'd with colours streaming,
Music sounding, lances gleaming,
Borne on high by gallant yeomen
Slowly forth to Albyn's foemen:
There stood Eric, smiling, bowing—
What a form for youthful wooing!
Bearded, dark, robust, and vigorous,
Stern, gigantic, blunt, and rigorous,
All his youthful manner over—
Such a man to play the lover,
'Mid such array, and such a scene,
And to such elf as wicked Wene!

Wene, from her gilded chair on high,
Return'd King Eric's courtesy,
With grace so courteous, and so kind,
It quite deranged the hero's mind.
He kiss'd his brown and brawny fist,
And laid it on his ample breast;
Then grinn'd with most afflicting leer,
And from his visage wiped the tear!
His nobles blush'd, and fretted sore,
And so did Eric, when 'twas o'er.
His face was like a winter day
Aping the summer's glancing ray,
With sunbeam low, and rainbow high,
Arching a frigid boreal sky,
Shaded with cloud so darkly bleak,
Like pall upon creation's cheek,
Rather than summer's youthful hue,
And cloudlets weeping balmy dew.

A herald then, with verge and sword,
And many a pompous, swelling word,
Approach'd King Eric, and at large,
Deliver'd o'er the sacred charge—
A charge, in value and esteem,
Ne'er trusted to a king but him.

Eric, with nodding burgonet,
Return'd an answer most discreet,
With sacred promise to neglect
No kind of homage or respect:
Wene curtsey'd with commanding air,
And motion'd him behind her chair!

The king look'd up, the king look'd down,
Uncertain if to laugh or frown;
But when he saw the flimsy fair
Moving like angel through the air,
With such a glittering gaudy show
Of flounce, and frill, and furbelow,
His eyes descended from the jilt
Slowly upon his weapon's hilt,
And something that he mutter'd there
Made all his warriors stern to stare.

When Haco met the elfin's eye,
Her little heart ne'er beat so high:
Full well she noted, as she pass'd,
His eager glances upward cast,
And, turning by her snowy veil,
With such a glance, and such a smile,
And such a transport of delight—
Prince Haco's heart was ravish'd quite!

Straight to King Eric's royal tent
Wene and her retinue were sent.
And strict commands were left therein,
To Frotho, the old chamberlain,
That Albyn's queen and suite should have
Whate'er their utmost thoughts could crave:
To that the king had bound him fast,
And he would keep it to the last.

Alas! in vain the high behest!
He little wist what vixen guest
Under his guardship he had ta'en,
But found it nothing to his gain.
Ere half an hour had overpast,
Frotho had applications vast
For things so rare and unforeseen,
He cursed his chance, the truce, the queen.
At first the old man did not miss
To bustle round, and answer "yes;"
But, ere the fall of night, he stood
More like a chamberlain of wood,
Than living thing of flesh and blood:
His senses utterly confounded,
With pages and with maids surrounded,
Calling for this, for that, for more
Than the old man, with all his lore,
Had e'er heard specified before.

Three times, in uttermost despair,
To Eric's presence did he fare,
With face that told how hard his lot.
And eyes that spoke what tongue could not,
Begging his master on his knee,
Of that dire charge his slave to free.
But the fourth time he came outright;
And then his straits were at the height.

The king on homelier couch was laid,
For sake of this illustrious maid;
And, when aroused from deep repose,
Full high his pride and choler rose:
"Frotho, begone! By heaven's good light,
I'll hear no more of queens to-night!"

"O king, my message I must tell:
I've served thee long, and served thee well;
But such a task as I have had
For one day more will drive me mad.
My heathbell beer, and cider good—
And two such browsts were never brew'd—
They've pour'd all forth; and now they whine
And yawn, and weep, and cry for wine.
My fish, they say, is food for hogs;
My hams they cast unto the dogs;
And seem united in one plot,
To crave for all that I have not.
And now, to crown these insults high,
The queen desires respectfully,
Her royal ally straight to send
Orders their treatment to amend;
And that 'tis meet her maids and she
Have night apartments separately,
Yet all conjoin'd, for their repose.
What's to be done, great Odin knows!

"She says your tent's not meet for men,
Nor better than a lion's den;
And high-born dames can't make them lairs
On hides of badgers and of bears:
And, therefore, she intreats you, grant
Them chambers, which they greatly want.
For sake of Heaven, my master kind,
Return that pestilence, Queen Hynde!"

"'Tis what she wants," King Eric said—
"A plot amongst her nobles laid
To win their sacred pledge again:
Such stratagems are my disdain.
No crime to me shall one impute—
I'll keep her, and my word to boot;
And if I fail, all men shall see
From fault of mine it shall not be.
I'll keep her till the time be run,
And the last combat lost or won;
Else she is more to reason blind
Than all the rest of womankind."

"Reason, my liege? God bless the word!
She's free of that as of a sword."

King Eric rose in growling mood,
And hurrying on his cloak and hood,
Went forth at midnight gallantly,
Beds for these maidens to supply.
A fair arrangement soon was made;
Queen Wene in Haco's tent was laid—
The very spot on earth where she
Wish'd that her residence might be:
Her sprightly lover and his train
Her guards, all rudeness to restrain.
Oh ne'er was maid so blest as Wene!

To tell the wiles of loving pairs,
And all the coquetry and airs
Of blooming maids, I do not deign—
Such theme is no delight of mine:
But Haco was in love sincere,
As most of youthful warriors are;
And Wene held hers of higher worth
Than e'er did maiden of the north.

Sooth, they for one another's sake
Were kept for days and nights awake;
And there were fretting, toying, whining,
Jealousies, and inward pining,
Fears what others might discover,
Speaking looks that bless the lover!

Nor can I half the projects sing,
Which Wene contrived to plague the king;
So much she drove him from his wit,
No suit from her he would admit;
He spent his days 'mid thousands round,
His nights where he could not be found;
And thus the lovers had their leisure
For grief, for strife, for pain, or pleasure.
But darker paths are to be trod,
For darker doings are abroad;
And secrets strange are on the wing,
Which you must list, and I must sing.

King Eric sat conceal'd, and free
Of woman's importunity,
And to the nobles of his land
Pass'd round the cup with ready hand:
When, lo! the captain of the ward
Brought in a stranger under guard!—
"My liege, here is a churlish wight,
Who craves admission to your sight;
But neither will his name disclose,
Nor whether of our friend or foes;
But so important is his suit,
He will no other tongue depute."

"Ay, captain; doubtless one of those,
Who, thrusting his officious nose
Into the affairs of other men,
Presumes their notice to obtain.—
Speak out, intruder—say at once
Thy name, thy business, and from whence?"

"My name or business few shall hear;
They're for King Eric's private ear.
If thou art he, I deem it fit
That these gruff earles who round thee sit,
Should be dismiss'd; for I have theme
Of which you could not even dream—
It is so base. Perhaps I'll sue
For matters touching maidens too:
That's as I choose; but must request
Your private ear, if so you list."

"It is not difficult to guess,
From thy presuming sauciness,
From whom thou comest; but perchance
Thy errand thou shalt miss for once.
Drag forth the knave without the line;
This is no business hour of mine."

The captain seized the plaided breast
Of this austere and stubborn guest;
But better had his hand withheld—
The stranger's haughty blood rebell'd:
He aim'd a blow so fierce and full
On that rude captain's burly skull,
That down he dropp'd with growlings deep,
Mumbling out oaths as in a sleep.

"Curse on thy petulance and thee!"
The stranger cried indignantly;
"I stand unarm'd, as knight should do
Who comes before a king to bow,
Else I had given thee, for thy meed,
That which should have laid low thy head
In peace from insult or affray,
Until the final judgment-day.
Here do I stand in Eric's sight,
A messenger in my own right,
Who tidings bring you to your cost;
Refuse them, and your army's lost,
While you shall stand as stocks or poles,
A horde of brainless jobbernoles,
A byword ever to remain:
Dismiss me at your peril and pain."—
King Eric stood, amazed to see
The stranger's bold effrontery,
And to a chamber led the way,
To listen what such guest would say.

The stranger doff'd his deep disguise,
And show'd to Eric's wondering eyes
A chief he formerly had known,
A traitor to the Scottish throne,
With whom he secret league had framed:
That chief in song must not be named;
Such shame it is to move a hand,
Or utter word, or lift a brand
Against our sacred native land.
Such cursed laurels, and such fame,
Shall blur the face of heaven with shame.

"I come to thee, my sovereign lord,
According to my pledged word,"
The traitor said. "In enmity
I fought against thy sway and thee;
My life by thee was saved, and all
My people from Norwegian thrall:
I will requite it, if I may.
Eric, with all thy proud array,
With all thy might, and valour wild,
Thou art as simple as a child.
Thou think'st thou hast within thy tent
A pledge the most magnificent;
The jewel of all earthly things,
The daughter of an hundred kings:
Eric (to Albyn's shame be't said),
Thou nothing hast but waiting maid,
And some few gigglets of the court
Sent forth of thee to make their sport.

"The queen is fled, with her the crown,
And all the riches of the town;
Each thing of value is defaced,
Or safely in Dunstaffnage placed;
The guards are set at ford and pier,
And now at thee they laugh and jeer.
The queen by night was borne away—
I bore a hand across the bay,
And viewed the works—the huge fascines,
The fosse, the bridge, the martial lines;
And must confess, ere them you win,
You'll buy all dear that is within."

King Eric's rage was too severe
His indignation to declare
In human speech: he look'd around,
And smiled, with eyes cast on the ground;
But when again those eyes were raised,
A flame unearthly in them blazed,
Which, from a face of generous light,
Had something dreadful to the sight.
It was as if the lightning's gleam
Had mingled with the noonday beam—
As ray of heaven and flash of hell
Together upon mortals fell.

No word the king had yet express'd,
When other message on him press'd:
Odin's high-priest it was who came,
With bloody hands and bloated frame—
A man who Eric more enchain'd
Than he the serfs o'er whom he reign'd.
And thus he spoke:—"O mighty king,
Some dire events are gathering
Around our heads. The heavenly host
Is wroth, and Norway's army's lost,
Unless these tyrants of the skies
Are straight appeased by sacrifice.

"I've sacrificed on Odin's shrine,
And Thor's, and Freya's, nine times nine
Of living creatures, one and all,
On which they feast in Odin's hall;
But all my omens are of death,
And all my answers given in wrath.
Now, mighty king, there's but one meed;
A human sacrifice must bleed.
A solemn offering there must be
Of stainless virgins three times three;
Though all the bounds of Caledon
In search of them should be outgone,
They must be had, whate'er the cost—
Else thou, and I, and all, are lost.
If these are found, in beauty's prime,
And to Valhalla sent in time,

To join the galliardise and noise,
And reap Valhalla's boisterous joys—
I pledge my word, and faith in Heaven,
Ample success shall yet be given
Unto your arms. But, sure as thou
And I are living creatures now,
That rite neglected, all is done,
And mighty Eric's race is run."

"Sire, I attend thy hest sublime—
Thou ne'er could'st come in better time:
I now have under my control
Twelve virgins, pure of frame and soul;
And thou as freely them shalt have
As e'er thou hadst a worthless slave.
Without the light of Odin's eye,
We're less than nought and vanity;
Then take them all, without debate,
And on thy altars immolate.
Captain, attend my strict behest:
Go forth with Odin's ancient priest,
And guard the altar of the Sun,
Until this great oblation's done;
And whosoever dares control
This high command, or fret, or growl,
Straight cut him off, whate'er he be,
Regardless of his high degree."

The priest let fall his ghastful jaw,
When Eric's ireful looks he saw;
He deem'd the order given in jest,
If not in mockery of a priest.
To immolate a sovereign dame,
And hostage maidens without blame,
Was act so ruthless and severe,
As Scania's annals did not bear.
But when he heard the closing threat,
His blood-shot eye became elate;
And through his soul of dark alloy
There darted stern and bloody joy.

As when, in ages long agone,
The sons of God before the throne
Of their almighty Father came,
To pay their vows, and name his name;
And there came one, the rest among,
In hopes that, in the glorious throng,
A skulking vagabond and spy
Might 'scape his lord's omniscient eye—
Think how that felon would appear
When these dread words fell on his ear,
"WHENCE COMEST THOU?"—Sure then that eye
That once had beam'd in heaven high,
Would be upraised in terror, fierce,
Towards the Lord of the universe!
If that great God had added then,
"Go, seize that righteous, best of men,
My servant Job, with all his kin,
And close them up thy den within
For evermore"—think of the air,
The savage joy, the dark despair,
That would have mingled in the mien
Of face that once had angel's been!
And think, too, of this look below—
This look from type of mankind's foe!
I love to draw a scene to thee
Where misconstruction cannot be,
And spread it to thy spirit's view,
In hopes the mental glass is true.

Eric went forth without delay;
The war-note rang from brake and brae,
And Norway's warriors rush'd with joy
To reave, to ravish, and destroy.
The priest of Odin likewise went
Up to Prince Haco's gaudy tent,
And laid the splendid Wene in thrall,
With her attendant maidens all.
Their feet with silken bands they tied,
Their lily hands down by each side;
Then bathed their bodies in the milk,
And robed them in the damask silk;
While every flower of lovely bloom,
And all that shed the sweet perfume,
In wreaths and fillets richly bound,
Bedeck'd their heads and bodies round.
The red rose of Damascus shed
Down from the brow the tints of red,
O'er faces late in beauty's glow,
But now as pale as winter snow.

They were, in sooth, a lovely sight,
Stretch'd side by side in bridal white;
Their lips in prayer to be forgiven;
Their streaming eyes turn'd towards heaven;
While Odin's priest and suffragan
The consecration-work began.

The bloated heathen cast his eyes
On that benignant sacrifice,
And, lifting up his hands on high,
The briny tear dropp'd from his eye:
It was not for the grievous doom
Of beauty blasted in the bloom,
But at the triumph and delight
Would be in Odin's halls that night.
He thought how his great god would laugh,
And how his warrior ghosts would quaff
Their skull-cups, fill'd unto the brim,
In long and generous healths to him
Who sent them such a lovely store
As warrior ghosts ne'er saw before;
And then he thought, how welcome he
In high Valhalla's dome would be.

Great God! 'tis thou alone can'st scan
Thy lingering, longing creature—man;
Who from the time that reason's ray
Beams from his eye on nature's sway,
Still onward must insatiate press
To unknown state of blissfulness.
One summit gain'd, how many more?
Before! before! 'tis still before,

But must be reach'd; till grasping far
Beyond the range of sun and star,
He rears himself a heavenly home,
In glory's everlasting dome.

Still must that state, to be believed,
Be something dark and unconceived;
And, distant far, involved must be
In shadows of futurity:—
Our Caledonian sires of yore
Look'd upward to their mountains hoar,
As to the place they loved the best
For home of everlasting rest;
And there, within his shroud of mist,
The rude, romantic sciolist
Hoped with the souls of friends to meet,
And roam in conversation sweet;
Or on his downy bark to sail,
High o'er the billows of the gale.
The Scandinavian look'd before
For wine and wassail, ramp and roar;
For virgins radiant as the sun,
And triumphs ever, ever won;
For revels on the fields above,
And maddening joys which warriors love.
But now, where rests the morbid eye
Of sceptical philosophy?
On the cold grave; and only this—
Worms, dust, and final nothingness!
Great God! within this world of thine,
Is there a human soul divine
That hopes no further bliss to scan!
How dark the question, "What is man?"—
What he hath been, the world can see;
Thou only know'st what he shall be!

While this ecstatic rite went on,
The battle raged in Beregon.
With Eric's host the day went hard,
Which caused the holy altar's guard
To be withdrawn. A virgin's prayer
No passing gale can waft in air
From its high aim: the gods are kind,
And lover's eyes are ill to blind.

Prince Haco, from the battle-field,
The stir within the camp beheld—
For still his eyes unconscious moved
Toward the treasure which he loved—
And sore he fear'd mischance might fall
To Albyn's queen and maidens all.
He sent a friend, whose truth he knew,
That scene of bustle to review,
And bring him word. Short then the space
Ere Haco vanish'd from his place,
And more with him, for there was need
Of ardent lover's utmost speed.

Wene in life's bustle took delight,
Whether in frolic or despite;
And even this splendid sacrifice
Held some enchantment to her eyes;
The robes, the flowers, the proud display,
The pallid forms that round her lay,
Whom Wene from year to year had known
To frolic prone, and that alone.
Though sore beset, she felt delight,
Some sly enjoyment, at their plight;
For still she deem'd that honour's law
So dire a warrant would withdraw.

But when the priests their hymns had sung,
And their white robes aside had flung;
When from long words they came to deeds;
Had laid their hands on victims' heads,
And sacred fire deposed the while,
To set on flame that lofty pile:
Good sooth! but Wene thought it was time
For her best wits to be in prime;
And straight she brought them to the test—
They ne'er could be in more request.

Soon as the rapt and ruthless priest
Had strew'd the death-dew on her breast,
(An ointment rich in heavenly worth,
And fragrance of the flowery north;)
And said the words that they were all
To say on entering Odin's hall,
Wene thus, with sharp and cutting speech,
Presumed the pedagogues to teach:—

"List me, thou priest of Scania's land,
And dolts that drudge at his command;
If you dare Christian maidens send
To Odin's hall, 'tis at an end—
Valhalla falls! And, take my word,
His godship of the shield and sword
From heaven descends with all his crew,
Driven headlong from yon vales of blue,
A banish'd, branded, broken corps,
Doom'd to disturb the heavens no more.

"A sacred sovereign, just and true,
Should better know these things than you;
For God's vicegerent must have wit
What the Supreme approves as fit:
And this is truth. If you would please
Great Odin, and his wrath appease,
Preserve us lovely, living things,
An offering to your King of kings.
For, should you dare suppose that he,
A god, so brutalized could be,
As in dead virgin to delight
More than in living beauty bright,
You shall stand beacons of his scorn,
And rue the time that you were born!

"But what is more: though Eric, blind
With anger, hath to you consign'd
Me and my maidens, to disgrace
The faith of Odin's kingly race;
On this rely: his ire and hate
Will turn on you when all too late;
For on his name you fix a stain
That ne'er can be wash'd out again.

Think of a sovereign's sacred blood;
And for a word in churlish mood
Dare not to break through law divine,
And bring a curse on all your line;
That curse that rends from Heaven's fair grace,
Pronounced by all the human race."

At the first part of Wene's address
The priesthood smiled in scornfulness,
But the last part appear'd too true,
Even to their own distorted view.
They paused, and whisper'd round the pile,
Keeping the flame subdued the while.
The virgins cried aloud to God
To look down from his blest abode,
And for his sake, who took the scorn
Of earthly virgin to be born,
Regard their peril and their grief,
And in his mercy send relief.
The priest of Odin was distress'd,
But to proceed he judged it best;
Though reason show'd the thing unjust,
These Christian prayers were ne'er to trust.

The flame unto the pile was set,
But seem'd to mount in slow regret;
Reluctantly, from spray to spray,
It crackled, hiss'd, and crept away.
The smoke arose in writhing pain,
Then bent its course to earth again,
As if affrighten'd to bedim
The snowy robe and tender limb;
A throe of hesitation dumb
Seem'd struggling not to be o'ercome.

Bless'd be the power of maiden's tongue,
Aye, in the lovely and the young,
Supreme; and blest the shrewd surmise
That marr'd this odious sacrifice!
Before the prayer of rueful Wene
Had half-way reach'd the last *Amen*;
Before the blaze had half-way won
Around the altar of the Sun,
The gods, or men, contrived so well
(For which the priests could never tell)
To send relief, that at one bound
It seem'd to spring from out the ground.
A rapid rush of clansmen true,
In tartans dark, and bonnets blue,
Sprung on the pile as on a prey,
And bore the sacrifice away.
The priests were hurtled to a side,
And with the fetters firmly tied;
Then up the flame rose to the sky,
Without a human groan or cry;
While Odin's servants lay amazed,
And on the bloodless offering gazed.

Within the tents, or them behind,
Swift as an image of the mind,
The clansmen vanish'd from the scene,
As quickly as their rise had been;
Each bearing virgin on his arm,
Panting with joy and wild alarm,
Their forms bedeck'd with many a wreath,
And all the bridal robes of death.

The men were arm'd with sword and shield;
And, as the priests lay on the field,
Full sore they wonder'd how they fared
So well; and why their lives were spared;
And how it happ'd their enemies
Had not made them the sacrifice.
But there they lay, safe and alone,
And the mysterious troop was gone
Without a word of threat or dare;
They could not tell from whence they were;
If by the sea or air they went,
Or if by man or angel sent!
But this most shrewd conjecture rose,
On priest's conception comatose,
That these gods of the Christian crew
Somewhat of earthly matters knew.

But all this while, from side to side,
The battle roll'd like swelling tide;
Now southward, bearing all before,
Now north, with eddy and with roar.
It raged in every lane and street,
And space where foemen chanced to meet.
There was no foot of hallow'd ground,
The regal Beregonium round,
That, ere the setting of the sun,
Was, inch by inch, not lost and won.

The men of Moray, cautious still,
Kept by the rampart of the hill,
And hurl'd their javelins afar,
Sore galling the Norwegian war;
But the fierce clansmen of the north,
And western tribes, of equal worth,
Rush'd to the fight withouten awe,
Whene'er a foeman's face they saw,
And grievous was the slaughter then,
Among the bravest Scottish men.

Oh what a waste of mortal life!
And what a stern and stormy strife
Prevail'd around, as far it spread,
Reeling, as warriors fought or fled!
Not then, as now, met mortal foes
In phalanx firm, to wheel and close,
Trying to win by warrior sleight,
Manœuvring by the left or right—
In those rude days they closed amain,
Fought shield to shield upon the plain;
And the more hot the battle glow'd,
The farther was it shed abroad;
Till every warrior, as might be,
Fought one with one, with two, or three;
And one resistless hero's hand
Oft bore the honours from a band.

So was it there; the battle's roar
Spread all along the level shore;

The city lanes were too confined.
Men had not scope unto their mind;
And forth they issued, west around
The citadel, on level ground;
And there, in motley mortal coil,
Went on the battle's bloody toil.

Gods! how King Eric's sovereign wrath
Peopled the ghostly vales of death!
Where'er his rapid course he turn'd,
With deadlier heat the combat burn'd;
Forward, around, where Eric came,
There roar'd the vortex of the flame.
'Twas like the whirlwind's rolling ire
Careering through a field of fire,
Rending and tossing, as in play,
The thundering element away.

There was a chief of Albyn's land,
Of proud renown, hight Coulan Brande,
Who held his sway by forest stern,
And many a mountain dark and dern,
From where the Lwin meets the tide,
To proud Ben-Airley's shaggy side;
That land of red-deer and of roe,
Possess'd by the great Gordon now.

That chief had borne his honours far,
Amid the waning southern war;
And his red balachs[1] of the hill
The foremost in the broil were still.
Ill brook'd he the degrading sight
Of that deray, by Eric's might:
The vortex came like rolling tide;
Brande call'd his followers to his side,
And bade them open and give ground
Till Eric pass'd, then wheel around,
And close upon his giant train,
Their ruthless ravage to restrain.

"Press on them hard; retreat be none;
Be work like that of warriors done.
Let me behold no broad claymore
That is not stain'd with foeman's gore;
Let me behold no buckler's face
That is not clour'd with sword or mace.
And could you sever from his train
That Hector of the northern main;
Then, by my Ciothar's lofty crest,
That props the heaven's own holy breast,
And by that heaven's uplifted dome,
The warrior's everlasting home,
This sword shall make that hero's brow
Stoop lowlier than his footstep now!"

Alongst the field King Eric flew.
The boldest from his brand withdrew;
Red desolation mark'd his track:
For his fierce veterans, at his back,
On either side were hard bestead,
Where gallant foeman fought and bled,
Along the midst of Coulan's train.
Oh dreadful grew the conflict then!
For the red balachs of the fell,
With shout, with clangour, and with yell,
Rush'd on the Norse from either hill.
And sore, with broadsword and with bill,
Gall'd the array of that fierce train,
Who, back to back, could scarce sustain,
Upon their long outlengthen'd line,
The claymore and the brigantine;
For every man that Coulan led
Had his broad breast with bull's-hide clad.

But Eric, reckless oft of life,
Press'd forward in the bloody strife,
Till so it happ'd, his train out-gone,
There was he left to fight alone.
Coulan perceived, with joyous thought,
The chance had come for which he sought;
Longer the strife he could not shun,
Something illustrious must be done;
Either his life he must lay down,
Or raise his name to great renown.
Then rousing all his energies
To this momentous enterprise,
Shaking his javelin and claymore,
He took his stand the king before.

"Oppressor of a guiltless land,
Presumptuous spoiler, stay thy hand,"
He cried, "and hear the truth severe,
That shall not quail for monarch's ear!
Say, is thy soul not darker now
Than e'er was Ethiop's sable brow,
Distain'd with every human crime,
That blotted has the rolls of time?
Detested persecutor! who
But thee would manhood's claim forego,
By raising war and breaking sooth
With beauty, innocence, and youth?
And, if no lies are on the wind,
With sacrifice of dreadful kind!
Thou monster! loathed be thy name
By all that bear the human frame!
Thy race is run, thy hour at hand.
God speed the shaft of Coulan Brande!"

With that his brazen javelin true,
With all his mountain might he threw,
And steady aim that might to tell,
But short the winged weapon fell:
For to his left wrist it was tied
With plaited thong of badger's hide;
And swifter than a mind can frame,
Unpractised in that warlike game,
He haul'd it back, and threw, and threw
With force increased, as nigh he drew.

Eric was gall'd, his ire arose:
For faster, fiercer, came the blows,
Without impediment or let,
From that aerial dragonet.

[1] *Balachs*—rude peasantry, boors.

It pierced his gorget and his gear,
Stunning his brow and sovereign ear;
Yet farther durst he not advance,
But check'd his own precipitance;
For all his valour and his rage
Were temper'd by reflection sage.
He foam'd with ire, then plunged amain,
Like restive steed that scorns the rein,
But saw, if once his men he left,
An hundred balachs, stern and deft,
Watching with keen and eager eye,
Unto their leader's aid to fly;
And with a smile of fierce disdain,
He back drew to his lines again.

Loud shouted Brande's obstreperous horde,
Lauding their brave and matchless lord,
Who, in the splendour of his might,
In single combat had outright
Put the great northern king to flight.

What vengeance Eric pour'd around,
Where'er a combatant he found
That dared the strife! and many a brave
And gallant knight found timeless grave.
Oft did his glance embrace the strand,
In search of haughty Coulan Brande,
Who on his name had cast a stain
That would not well wash out again;—
Alas! he knew not, nor could see
How much more deep that stain would be!

Brande of his fortune was so proud,
The very ground on which he stood
He seem'd to spurn, as o'er the war
His eye roll'd loftily afar.
This, Donald Bane, his neighbour sly,
Beheld, and strode up hastily,
And said these words, for clansmen near
Each other's pride could never bear:—

"Oh gallant Brande, make haste, advance;
For none, save thee, with sword or lance,
Can check yon scourge of Scotia's host;
Advance, or Albyn's banner's lost!
Gillespick's down; Clan-Gillan's broke;
Lochourn leans o'er his tarnish'd oak;
My brother Allan keeps aloof,
Trustless of arm and armour's proof;
The field's laid waste!—Oh, Brande, there's none
Can turn that tide but thou alone."

"Reptiles!" cried Brande, and forth he flew,
Curling his lip, and eke his brow,
Straight onward, Eric to amate;
Yet, there was something in his gait
That show'd reluctance to the way;
A hurry, mingled with delay,
Perhaps an omen ill defined,
A darksome boding of the mind.

As ever you saw a fiery steed
Eyeing the path with wistful dread,
And eyes with gleams of fury glancing,
Wheeling, snorting, rearing, prancing;
Till, lashed amain, away he breaks,
The steep ascent with fury takes,
And, panting, foaming, flounders on,
Until, his strength and spirits gone,
Straining to do more than he can,
Down rush the chariot, horse, and man.

So was it now with Coulan Brande,
The Lord of Lwin's forest land,
The hunter proud of Garnachoy,
Of Laggan, Lurich, and Glen-Roy.
Goaded along, he cross'd the field,
Uprear'd his sword, advanced his shield,
And straight in front of Eric ran,
And thus address'd the godlike man:—

"Traitor, methought that I had once
Given thee to know thy puissance
Not matchless was. Why wilt thou then
Come fuming 'mid ignoble men,
Staining thy brand with boorish blood?
Tyrant, this braggart lustihood
Becomes thee not. Desist, for shame!
Here stands thy conqueror, thee to tame."

Eric laugh'd loud; both cliff and shaw
Made answer to his keen ha, ha!
No more he said, but sword in hand
He ruthless rush'd on Coulan Brande;
Furious upon the chief he came,
Trowing his mountain might to tame
At the first blow; but tale he lost,
And reckon'd once without his host.

Brande his broad buckler managed so,
That Eric's furious rush and blow
Were borne aside with science yare,
And Eric spent his force in air;
So freely spent, that, on the strand,
Forward he stumbled o'er his brand;
And since his restless life began,
Such perilous risk it never ran.

Brande was too brave of soul and mind
To strike a prostrate foe behind;
Else doubt is none, that, in that strife,
Low at his steps lay Eric's life;
And kinsmen ever blamed the hand
That nail'd him not to Scotia's strand.

Eric arose; his cheek was flush'd;
With shame the mighty monarch blush'd,
In such an onset thus to be
Outdone, and more in courtesy;
The pangs he felt were so severe,
They were too much for him to bear;
And wish from these his heart to free,
Had nearly brought him to his knee;
But pride of rank, and pride of name,
His brilliant and untarnish'd fame,

Muster'd around without control,
And whisper'd vengeance to his soul.
He rose and turn'd upon his foe;
Brande all undaunted met the blow;
And in the combat that ensued,
Show'd equal might and fortitude.

The king rush'd in, with guard and clasp,
And, trusting to his powerful grasp,
From which no single force could free,
He closed with Brande impetuously;
And seizing on his gorget fast,
With wrench that giant force surpass'd,
He snapp'd the clasps of burnish'd steel;
And casque and cuirass, to his heel,
Came off with jangle and with clang,
And on the level roll'd and rang.

Brande turn'd to fly, for, in a word,
His buckler too, if not his sword,
Had in that struggle fall'n or broke;
He turn'd to fly; but at a stroke
Eric, while at his utmost speed,
Sheer from his body hew'd his head.
Far roll'd the bloody pate away;
The body ran, without a stay,
A furlong in that guise uncouth;
So said the Norse, and swore it truth!

The shouts of subjects from each side
Aroused the hero's warrior pride—
A moment roused it; but anon
On his brown cheek the tear-drop shone,
And throbs, that in his bosom's cell
Heaved like an earthquake, told too well
How sore he rued the ruthless blow
Inflicted on so brave a foe,
To whose high generous soul he owed
A life most haplessly bestow'd;
And, like a man from dream awoke,
These words he rather groan'd than spoke:
"Ah! how this laurel galls my brow!
Eric ne'er vanquish'd was till now."

The battle now had spread away
Round all the friths of Keila bay—
Parties with adverse parties meeting,
And both sides losing and defeating.
Where chief 'gainst adverse chief prevail'd,
Their partial success never fail'd;
And braver feats were never done
Than were that day round Beregon;
Nor more illustrious were the slain—
No, not on Ilium's classic plain.

The chiefs that most distinguish'd shone
In that dire day's confusion
Were Allan Bane, who, 'mid the war,
O'erthrew the giant Osnagar
Despite the monster's might in weir,
And execrations dread to hear:
Roaring and cursing his decay,
He foam'd his savage soul away.

And the brave Lord of Sutherland,
Of dauntless heart, and steady hand,
Never, in all that bloody coil,
Engaged with foe he did not foil;
A Finnish prince and Danish lord
Both sunk beneath his heavy sword;
And all their buskin'd followers fierce,
Dismay'd at such a stern reverse,
Before the men of Navern dale
Fled like the chaff before the gale.

Intrepid Gaul, the Lord of Tain,
And Ross's wild and wide domain,
Bore on with unresisted sway;
He seem'd some demon of dismay,
That through the ranks of Scania's war
Bore desolation fierce and far;
His hideous face was grisly grim,
His form distorted every limb;
Yet his robust and nervous arm
Laid warriors low as by a charm—
For that rude form contain'd a mind
Above the rest of human kind.

Distress'd by Brande's unworthy fate,
Eric drew off ere it was late,
Scowling and sobbing by the way,
Like warrior that had lost the day;
And oft repeating, as before,
These words, that grieved his captains sore:
"Eric is conquer'd at the last!
His day of victory is o'erpast;
A conquest ne'er to be believed,
Reversed, remitted, nor retrieved!"

The gathering trumpets' lordly sound
Gather'd his scatter'd bands around,
And from a fiercer, bloodier fray,
That note ne'er call'd his troops away;
For, though the 'vantage they had won,
Never was Eric so outdone.

The pride of Albyn's mountain strand,
The great emporium of the land,
The royal city now was lost,
And occupied by Eric's host;
The seven high towers of Selma too,
Alas! were all abandon'd now,
That for a thousand years had stood,
Circled by mountain, cliff, and flood,
And ne'er had oped at foe's behest,
Except to captive or to guest.

For why, this landing unawares
Placed Hynde amid a thousand snares;
Her throne, her city, and her state,
Beleaguer'd by a force so great,
That the least turn of fortune might
Place all at Eric's steps outright.
Her nobles, this to countervail,
Bore her away by oar and sail
In dead of night, and not alone;
Her court, her treasures, and her throne,

Safe in Dunstaffnage did they place,
Where they had vantage-ground and space
To place their guards by ford and mere,
That none should come their treasure near.

Their queen thus safe, it was not strange
That they, with coolness and revenge,
Fought out the field, from early noon
Until the rising of the moon;
And then drew off, from pursuit free,
In still and sullen enmity.

Though conscious that a fraud full low
They practised had upon the foe,
They knew not yet on what pretence
Eric had dared this bold offence,
Breaking his faith without regard,
And rushing on them unprepared.
Their loss was great, without defeat;
Yet still their queen and coronet,
And sacred choir, they, all the three,
Had placed in full security;
Hence they resolved to suffer dumb
The good or ill, as each should come.

Outposts and watchers not a few
They placed around in order due,
And straight prepared, with rueful speed,
To pay due honours to the dead.
At dawn a messenger was sent,
With all despatch to Eric's tent;
To ask of him one peaceful day,
Due honours to their slain to pay.

The king at first declined discourse;
O'erwhelm'd with sorrow and remorse,
He sat alone, and neither foe
Nor friend durst nigh his presence go.
His ruthless and ungenerous deed
Gnaw'd his great soul without remede;
And the brave youth he loved the most,
Prince Haco, was in battle lost,
With all the chief men of his train,
And were not found among the slain.
If these were captives, what avail
Had fall'n into his enemy's scale!
If they had only quit the land,
The sceptre trembled in his hand.

But, worst of all, the sacrifice
By which he trusted from the skies
Support to win, at Odin's frown,
That dear-bought hope had been struck down;
And now his priests, in deep despair,
Foreboded nought but dole and care.

Eric sat wondering all alone
Into what land these maids had gone—
If some intrepid chief's array
Had come and stolen his pledge away,
Or Odin had upborne them all
Alive into Valhalla's hall.

At all events, that stay was cross'd,
The mighty sacrifice was lost,
And Eric was assured too well
Of more mishap than tongue could tell;
In such a toilsome mood he flounced
When Albyn's herald was announced.
And this was all the answer brief
He deign'd unto the Scottish chief:

"Go, tell him to speed home apace;
With son of that deceitful race
No speech I hold—no, not a word,
Save o'er the gauntlet or the sword."

"Sire, he is sent express, to say
The Scots request one peaceful day,
To bury those in battle slain,
Which, if refused, they come again
Over their carcases to fight,
And God in heaven support the right!
For that dear privilege they'll stand,
While living man is in the land."

"The Scots' request is bold and high,"
King Eric said with kindling eye;
"And straight I grant it, with demand
That, at the bier of Coulan Brande,
I as chief mourner may appear;
Then all the obsequies, so dear
To kindred souls, shall mingled be,
Without offence or frown from me.
In feast and sport we all combine;
No answer—let the charge be mine."

Next morn, by mutual consent,
The arms of either host were pent
In heaps within each camp, and all
Flock'd to the mingled festival.
At Coulan's bier King Eric took
Chief place, with attitude and look
That struck both friend and foeman's eye
As fraught with dread solemnity.
High on the hill of Kiel were laid
The ashes of the mighty dead,
Hence call'd, with all its cairns so gray,
"Hill of the Slain," until this day.
There, over Coulan's lowly urn,
The mighty Eric deign'd to mourn;
Bow'd his imperial head full low,
Wiped his red-eye and burning brow,
And thus address'd the gaping crowd,
That motley, moving multitude:—

"Soldiers and denizens, give ear;
I say the words that all may hear:
Here, o'er the dust of chief, I bow,
That conquer'd him who speaks to you.
He owns it. Eric of the north,
Who ne'er before acknowledged worth
Superior to his own, avows
That Coulan Brande has shorn his brows
Of all the honours there that grew,
So lone, untarnish'd, bright, and new.

"This chief, in battle's deadliest hour,
A forfeit life held in his power;
That life was mine; it lay full low
Beneath his lifted, threaten'd blow:
But, scorning vantage and reward,
High honour only his regard,
His hand withheld the blow intended:
Would to the gods it had descended!
And cleft this heart, whose festering core
Feels pangs it never felt before.

"Fortune gave me such chance again;
Where was thine honour, Eric, then?
In heat of ire I struck the blow
That laid this injured hero low;
But that this stroke I did not stay
I'll rue until my dying day,
And to the world this truth proclaim—
Eric, with all his martial fame,
For once acknowledges compeer;
Vanquish'd in that he held most dear,
He shrouds the palm can ne'er return
Within this low and sacred urn.

"Warriors from shores of either main,
In honour of this hero slain,
Contend in every manly game,
To be memorial of his name
And theirs, upon that fatal field,
Who rather chose to die than yield.
Prizes I grant of warrior store,
Such as were never given before.

"As is the wont, in Albyn's land,
For the chief hero's shield and brand,
The trial first of skill must be
Who throws the dart as well as he;
For in that art he could outdo
All men that ever javelin threw.
Hie to the contest; every throw
Be steady as at breast of foe."

Each chief, each prince, and petty king,
Prepared the javelin to fling;
But, of them all, the steadiest hand
And eye were those of Olaf Brande,
Who bore in triumph from the field
His honour'd brother's sword and shield,
Though it was ween'd superior skill
Could well have won, but had not will.

The prize that next was raised in sight
Was golden braeelet burnish'd bright,
To him that in the race should speed,
And chief, and hind, and all exceed.
For there no preference was to be
Conferr'd on lineage or degree;
Nor was it needful: in that age,
The low estate of vassalage
Withheld the peasant from the bound
Of high exploit or deed renown'd.
A being mean of mind and frame,
Of chief supreme the creature tame,
No heart had he, no towering hope
With proud Milesian might to cope;
And of these castes, as legends say,
The traits remain until this day.

Eager the golden prize to win,
The light of heart came pouring in—
All noble youths, of agile make,
Who loved the race for running's sake,
And hoped, at least, to mar the way
Of the superiors in the play;
But chiefly, if they saw the Norse,
Would Albyn's youths put to the worse.

No fewer wights than twenty-two,
All rank'd in one continuous row,
Stood stripp'd and belted for the fun,
And panting for the word to run.
The bugle sounded short and low—
A paleness glitter'd on each brow;
The bugle sounded loud and long,
And every chest, with heavings strong,
And mouth, seem'd gasping breath to gain
More than their circuits could contain.
The bugle's third note was a yell,
A piereing, momentary knell;
Oh what relief to every heart!—
It was the warning note to start.
Then, like a flock of sheep new shorn,
Or startled roes at break of morn,
Away they spring mid whoop and hollo,
And light of foot were those could follow.

For three good furlongs of the space
All was confusion in the race;
For there was jostling, jumping, fretting,
And breasts with elbows rudely meeting.
One luckless youth, who took the van,
Had overstrain'd him as he ran;
His ardent breast had borne him so
Much faster than his wont to go,
That his untoward limbs declined
To strike as fast as he'd a mind;
Refused the effort with disdain,
And down he stumbled on the plain.
Before one could have utter'd cry,
Or sworn an oath, or closed an eye,
A dozen flagrant youths and more
Were heap'd and tumbling on the shore,
Each muttering terms uncouth to tell.
And cursing aye the last that fell.

Some rose and ran, though far behind;
Some join'd the laugh and lay reclined:
But now the interest grew extreme—
Feldborg the Dane, like lightning's gleam,
Shot far ahead, and still askance
Backward he threw his comely glance,
Which said full plainly, "I opine,
Most worthy sirs, the prize is mine."
And still, as straining in the race,
A smile play'd on his courteous face;

For who, in courtly form and air,
With Danish Feldborg could compare?

The farthest goal is won and past,
And Feldborg still is gaining fast;
Aloud the joyous clamour grew
From Eric's grim and boisterous crew,
While one small voice alone could cry
From Albyn's host, "Fie, kinsmen, fie!"
Eon of Elry heard that word
Call'd by a loved and honour'd lord,
And straight the bold athletic bard
Was after Feldborg straining hard,
Skimming the sandy level plain
With swiftness man could not sustain.

Feldborg of Denmark, now the time
To weave thy name in lofty rhyme!
To rank thee with the seraphim
Depends but on thy strength of limb!
But well thou knew'st that chief, or king,
Or living creature without wing,
To scale the heaven might try as well,
As run with thee and thee excel;
All this thou knew'st; it was thy boast,
And so did many to their cost.

Eon M'Eon, do not flinch,
For thou art gaining inch by inch;
Strain thy whole frame and soul to boot;
Nay, thou art gaining foot by foot;
The crowd perceives it with acclaim,
And every accent breathes thy name.
Eon of Elry, God thee speed!
One other stretch, and thou'rt ahead.

Feldborg, what's that which thee doth gall?
What does thy look equivocal
Note by thy side glittering so bright?—
A bracelet clasp, by Odin's might!
And that proud sleeve in verity,
Eon of Elry forces by.
Strain, Feldborg, strain, or thou shalt lose;
His elbow kythes, and eke his nose!—
Where are they now? In moment gone!
And Feldborg gains the goal alone!
Elry lies prostrate on the plain,
Laughing aloud, in breathless pain,
Spurning the land with fitful scream;
While his bright eye's unearthly gleam,
Bespoke full well how ill content
His heart was with the incident.
With curling lip, and brow of flame,
And cheek that rankled half for shame,
He laughing rose, and wiped his brow,
"By Heaven, sir, I no more could do!"

The golden gem of potent charm
Glitters on Feldborg's swarthy arm;
While he survey'd the trophy grand,
With countenance as proudly bland,
As every bard in Albyn green
An eulogist to him had been,
And given to him a fulsome lay,
The dearest pledge e'er came his way.

Feldborg, thou hast effected feat
That stamps thee consummately great;
For thou hast vanquish'd one whose name
Stands highest on the list of fame.
Although an enemy and a Dane,
I hold thy victory immane;
Laud to thy noble visage swart!
Illustrious man of tale and chart!
Professor of the running art!

The game that follow'd next the race,
Was pitching of an iron mace
From buskin'd foot, which made it wheel
With whirling motion like a reel
Aloft in air—I not pretend
This ancient game to comprehend;
But yet th' expert could pitch it straight,
Like arrow at convenient height,
And lodge it at the farthest goal,
Fix'd in the earth like upright pole.
A Danish game it was, therefore
The Danish chiefs the mastery bore;
As for the Scots, they toil'd in vain;
Like coursers without curb or rein,
They spent their spirits and their might
In efforts without rule or slight.

King Eric, grimly smiling, came
As if in sport to share the game;
He heaved the mace like stager's poy,
And twirl'd it like a lady's toy;
Then from his buskin's brazen toe,
Like arching meteor made it go;
Till far beyond the utmost cast,
Deep in the soil 'twas planted fast.
No clamour rose, as one might trow,
From such a monarch's master-throw;
But through the host, from man to man,
A buzz of admiration ran,
And no one judged it for his thrift
The mighty mace again to lift.

"Come, princes! captains!" Eric cried,
With voice as though he meant to chide;
"Come! To the sport! It is confest
You're playing with it for a jest.
Pitch all again. I gave that throw
As earnest of what more I'll do."

Each chief disclaim'd the fruitless deed
Or hemm'd, and smiled, and shook the head,
And all prepared the prize to yield,
And rush into some other field.
When lo! a burly peasant proud
Came dashing through the heartless crowd
Shouldering both chief and vassal by
As things of no utility.
Straight to th' avoided mace he broke,
And aye he stutter'd as he spoke;

Fast from his tongue the threat'nings fell,
Though what they were no man could tell.
Up from its hold he tore the mace,
And ran unto the footing place;
But, lo! his sinewy foot was bare,
Nor sandal, hoe, nor brog was there!
To pitch the iron club from thence,
Surpass'd even savage truculence.

The laugh was loud, while, in his need,
The kerne look'd round for some remede,
And for a bonnet grasp'd his hair,
But a red snood alone was there.
With grasp of power he seized the bent,
A sod from the earth's surface rent;
Which, placing on his foot with care,
The massive club he rested there;
Then his strong limb behind him drew,
And grinn'd and goggled as he threw;
But with such force he made it fly,
It swither'd through the air on high,
Soughing with harsh and heavy ring,
Like sound of angry condor's wing,
Till far beyond King Eric's throw
It delved the earth with awkward blow.

"Beshrew the knave!" King Eric cried;
His nobles with a curse replied,
And crowded to the spot outright,
To wonder at the peasant's might.
"Who, or what is this savage young?"
Was ask'd by every flippant tongue;
But to make answer there was none,
Nor one could tell where he was gone;
The golden prize on high was rear'd,
But claimant there was none appear'd.

"It is the giant Lok, I know,
Sent by the gods from hell below,
Against my growing power to plot,
And vanquish might which man could not,"
With look demure, King Eric cried.
"'Tis Lok!" each Scanian tongue replied.
The victor was not found, nor came
His prize of lofty worth to claim;
And all the Norse believed, and said,
Their king by Lok was vanquished.

The leaping, wrenching, fencing, all
Were won by youths of Diarmid's hall;
While Eric's soldiers took their loss,
With manners quarrelsome and cross.
But of the boat-race these made sure;
The gilded barge was theirs secure;
On that they reckon'd, and prepared
To row with skill and strength unspared.

Fourteen fair barges in a row,
Started at once with heaving prow;
With colours, flags, and plumes bedight;
It was forsooth a comely sight!
King Eric's seven good rowers swarth,
Chosen from all the sinewy north,
Were men of such gigantic parts,
And science in the naval arts,
And with such force their flashes hurl'd,
They fear'd no rowers of this world.

King Eric, crown'd with many a gem,
Took station on his barge's stem;
Secure of victory, and proud
To shoot before the toiling crowd,
And spring the first upon the shore;
Full oft he'd done the same before.

Seven boats of either nation bore,
In proud array from Keila's shore,
With equal confidence endow'd;
To each seven rowers were allow'd;
But by the way they spied, with glee,
That one Scots barge had only three,
And she was bobbing far behind,
As toiling with the tide and wind;
The rowers laugh'd till all the firth
Resounded with the boist'rous mirth.

Around an isle the race was set,
A nameless isle, and nameless yet;
And when they turn'd its southern mull,
The wind and tide were fair and full;
Then 'twas a cheering sight to view
How swift they skimm'd the ocean blue;
How lightly o'er the wave they scoop'd,
Then down into the valley swoop'd;
Like flock of sea-birds gliding home,
They scarcely touch'd the floating foam.
But like dim shadows through the rain,
They swept across the heaving main;
While in the spray, that flurr'd and gleam'd,
A thousand little rainbows beam'd.

King Eric's bark, like pilot swan,
Aright before the centre ran,
Stemming the current and the wind
For all his cygnet fleet behind,
And proudly look'd he back the while,
With lofty and imperial smile.
O mariners! why all that strife?
Why plash and plunge 'twixt death and life?
When 'tis as plain as plain can be,
That barge is mistress of the sea.

Pray, not so fast, Sir Minstrel rath!
Look back upon that foamy path,
As Eric does with doubtful eye,
On little boat that gallantly
Escapes from out the flashing coil,
And presses on with eager toil,
Full briskly stemming tide and wind,
And following Eric hard behind;
And, worst of all for kingly lot,
Three rowers only man the boat!

"Ply, rowers, ply! We're still ahead.
Lean from your oars—shall it be said

That the seven champions of the sea
Were beat outright by random three?
Ply, rowers, ply! She gains so fast,
I hear their flouts upon us cast.
'Tis the small boat, as I'm on earth!
That gave so much untimely mirth."

"Curse on her speed! Strain, rowers, strain!"
Impatient Eric cried again;
"See how she cleaves the billow proud,
Like eagle through a wreathy cloud:
Strain, vassals, strain! If we're outrun,
By moving thing below the sun,
I swear by Odin's mighty hand,
I'll sink the boat and swim to land!"

Hard toil'd King Eric's giant crew;
Their faces grim to purple grew;
At last their cheering loud ye-ho
Was changed into a grunt of woe.
For she, the little bark despised
And foully at the first misprised,
Came breasting up with skimming motion,
Scarce gurgling in the liquid ocean;
And by, and by, and by she bore,
With whoop of joy, and dash of oar!
The foremost rower plied his strength
On two oars of tremendous length,
Which boards on further end reveal'd,
Broader than Eric's gilded shield;
The monarch trembled and look'd grave
To see the strokes that rower gave.

Just then he heaved his oars behind,
Like falcon's wings lean'd to the wind
As pass'd his little pinnace plain
The monarch's meteor of the main;
And, as he bent his might to row,
He struck King Eric's gilded prow
With such a bounce and such a heave,
That back she toppled o'er the wave,
And nigh had thrown, as nigh could be,
Her king and champions in the sea.—
"Ho! oar-room, friends! your distance keep,"
Cried that rude Hector of the deep;
"Ye-ho! ye-ho!
How well we go!
Ours is the bark that fears no foe!"

Then, not till then, King Eric saw
A sight that struck him dumb with awe:
He saw that wight, the very same
In the last sport who overcame,
And now, by Odin's dread decree,
Had vanquish'd him most ominously.—
"'Tis Lok the giant! Lok again!"
King Eric cried in thrilling pain;
"How flourish can our sovereign sway
If gods and demons both gainsay?"—
"'Tis Lok!" responsed each rower grim,
"Too oft I've thwarted been by him!"

With sullen prow and lagging oar
The vanquished barges reach'd the shore,
But there the conqu'rors could not see;
The boat stood leaning to the lee;
An ancient boat, with wale and wem,
And gilded mermaid on her stem.
Then great the press and bustle grew,
That wondrous boat of hell to view,
Till an old man of Isla came,
And of the marvel made a claim;
He'd lent his boat for trivial fare,
But knew not who the hirers were.
That poor man got the prize prepared,
Or in its stead a meet reward.

The tossing of the pond'rous mall
Was won by Ross of Armidell;
And he who farthest threw the stone
Was from the Spey, his name unknown.
But when the rival archers came,
At target hung afar to aim,
The Scandinavians bore the gree,
For ages trained to archery.
No bard can now detail those games,
Nor modern tongue express their names,
But at the setting of the sun,
Nor Scot nor Norse had lost or won;
The rival nations equal stood
In feats of skill and lustihood;
One prize remain'd—one, and no more,
To stamp one side THE CONQUEROR!
And now, no living can conceive
The ardour that prevail'd that eve;
It was as if each nation's fate
Hung on the scale, it was so great.

The prize was one of high avail,
A Roman sword and coat-of-mail;
A sword most dazzling to behold,
Its basket was of burnish'd gold;
Such blade no Briton ever drew,
A two-edged blade of glancing blue,
Five feet from point to bandelet,
And yet when bent they fairly met.
A mighty Roman general wore
That sword and armour both of yore.
The feat of wrestling was the game,
On which each nation's pride or shame,
As on a balance heaving, hung,
While every patriot heart was wrung
With feelings of such poignant sway,
As none can rate this latter day.

A level field was fenced around
With palisades, 'mid rising ground,
And, after proclamation due,
Into that field the wrestlers drew;
But that no vantage one might gain,
The Norse and Scot went twain by twain.
Each prince and chief of note was there;
Threescore and four came pair by pair;

Eric among the rest appear'd,
Who never man at wrestling fear'd.

The bugle sounded to begin,
And two by two, as they came in,
The wrestlers join'd most orderly,
With toe to toe, and knee to knee.
And there each stood with parched throat,
Waiting the bugle's warning note;
Then fiercely heel on heel 'gan dashing,
And bones and sinews rudely crashing,
And, ere the heart of keenest throes
Had beat on breast a hundred blows,
Or three short minutes were outgone,
Thirty and two were overthrown.

They counted heads of Dane and Scot,
And wrestled till the end by lot;
And, after many a strain and twist,
And many a bruised antagonist,
Two conquerors there stood reveal'd,
One at each corner of the field.
Eric was one in trial true;
The belted plaid and bonnet blue
Bespoke the country and degree
Of his tall comely enemy;
From his high bearing and his mien,
He seem'd some chief in manhood green;
All knew him as he forward came,
They said, though none could say his name;
But many an anxious eye was bent,
On this decisive throw intent.

Slowly they near'd; the stranger's air,
Was sauntering, stately, void of care,
But Eric's eye had fiery glow
Like that of planet rising low;
His brows the while projecting far,
Like dark cloud over rising star;
And once he started and uprear'd
His form as if he treachery fear'd,
Or mark'd a feature undefined
That brought some guilty deed to mind.

The youth, too, paused, and still as death,
Like statue without blood or breath,
He stood, with hands half raised and bent,
And face fix'd on the firmament,
As if he wrestled had with heaven,
Or with some strong enchantment striven.
Men were afraid, and Eric's jaw
Descended as oppress'd with awe,
For Lok across his memory came,
Like thrill of an electric flame;
But whether the youth the powers unblest
And adverse to the gods address'd,
Or look'd with suppliant's humble eye
To Odin's stern divinity,
Bowed to the glorious God of Day,
Or own'd the Son of David's sway,
No one could guess; for in those times,
These were the gods of northern climes.

This wild and solemn reverie o'er,
Eric stood up the youth before,
And words of wonderment express'd
How he had vanquished all the rest;
For that some champions had been thrown,
Who ne'er in prowess had been known
To yield to man, save one alone.

The youth no answer deign'd, or heed,
To this sly boast of matchless deed,
But moveless stood as form of stone,
And turn'd his eye to Beregon.
"Come, art thou ready?" Eric said.
The youth a slight obeisance made,
With due respect, as it behoved;
But neither hand nor foot he moved,
Till Eric laid his arms around,
And in his iron grasp him bound;
Then lithely did he square each limb,
And set his joints in proper trim.

The king that day had thrown his men
By heaving them aloft, and then,
With foot advanced, and ready knee,
Twisting them down full dexterously.
But when he tried that youth to foil,
He seem'd to grow unto the soil;
Despite the force of Eric's frame,
Which might of man could never maim,
That stranger wight with careless air
Preserved his footing firm and fair,
And circumvented with such sleight
His great opponent's perilous might.
That even the monarch's breathless jest
Began his doubts to manifest.

"Ay, ay! so thou refusest even
To make one movement towards heaven!
Bespeaks not this a perverse mind,
And heart most sordidly inclined?
Well, some new mode we then must press
To suit thy taste of daintiness."

With that the hero nerved his might,
And roused his spirit to the height;
That might which (save by wizard's charm)
Had never blench'd at mortal arm,
That so by one resistless throw
He might o'erpower this haughty foe,
And in the lists the highest place
Might still pertain to Odin's race.

The effort's past; the trip, the strain,
All given full sway, and given in vain!
And ne'er before had human eye
Beheld such marvellous energy,
Without all surliness or wrath;
But now King Eric gasp'd for breath
So sore, that every Danish eye
Saw double; many a heart beat high,
While ears sang out the torrent's lay,
Dreading the issue of the day.

The doughty youth had all this while
Nor utter'd word nor deign'd a smile;
On the defensive kept he shy,
The monarch's utmost skill to try;
But now, with such an agile pace
That eye his motions scarce could trace,
He wheel'd, and sprang from side to side,
And sundry feints and amblings tried;
Till, ere on-looker was aware,
He struck King Eric's heels in air.
Yet to the game inured so well,
He caught the monarch as he fell,
And, as supporting him he stood,
These words nigh chill'd King Eric's blood:—
"Ah! God forbid that king renown'd,
And head with sacred honours crown'd,
Should fall degraded to the ground!"

Although the faltering cluck was gone,
At once the tongue and voice's tone
Assured King Eric of the sway
That twice had vanquish'd him that day.
And to be thus within the clasp
Of giant Lok's own hellish grasp
(Whom Scania's priests, a thing full odd!
Hold both a demon and a god)—
Oh that was such a direful case,
It spoke the end of Odin's race!

"Down with immortal rivalship!"
King Eric cried, with quivering lip;
"This is unfair! Let mortal man
Vanquish King Eric if he can;
But with the Eternal's rival he
Presumes no chance of mastery.
I know thee, fiend! thy dreadful name,
Thy malice, and thy power supreme!
And, for one punishment condign,
Thy hate to Odin's heavenly line.
Though of the race of gods, thou art
A deadly demon at the heart!
And though in various forms this day
Thou hast o'ercome me in the play,
Be't known to all the world abroad,
To man I yield not, but a god.
For thou art Lok, that being stern,
Whom reason's eye can ill discern;
A god—yet virtue's deadliest foe,
And ruler of the realms below."

The youth laugh'd a derisive peal,
And lightly turn'd upon his heel,
To work his way throughout the list,
And aye he mumbled as he press'd
Some scraps of high contempt, that spoke
Of "mongrel gods, and fabulous Lok."
And he had vanish'd in a trice,
As was his wont; but every voice
Call'd out to stop him, friend or foe,
That Albyn might her champion know.—
"Stop him!" cried Eric; "'tis my mind.
You may as well oppose the wind;
Or try to stop, by mortal force,
The lightning in its vengeful course."

The youth was stay'd and brought to task;
All came to listen, few to ask;
And there they heard, without reserve,
From tongue they deem'd that could not swerve
From native truth; for there stood he,
Telling, in flush'd simplicity,
How he was all unknown to fame;
That poor MacUiston was his name,
Though some there were, on Erin's shore,
Call'd him M'Righ, and Eiden More,
He knew not why; but he had come
Of late to seek his native home,
And there had first that self-same day
Beheld his country's proud array;
That, eager in the lists to try
His youthful strength with princes high,
He had in various garbs appear'd,
And gain'd, because he nothing fear'd;
Having no title of renown,
Nor line, to bring discredit on.

With shouts that echoed far away,
And hush'd the waves on Keila Bay,
The sons of Albyn gather'd round,
And heaved their champion from the ground;
And with obstreperous acclaim,
Lauded MacUiston's humble name.
The Norsemen's looks were all dismay,
And dark as gloom of winter day,
As well they might; for he whose worth
They eyed as pole-star of the north,
By a Scots peasant overcome,
Stood sullen, mortified, and dumb!

The sword was brought, of magic mould,
And armour glittering all with gold,
And proffer'd to this wondrous guest,
Whom Eric mildly thus address'd:—

"This is thy prize, and fairly won;
But, as no man beneath the sun
Can this enormous weapon wield,
Or prove the armour and the shield,
Let them by friends appraised be,
And I'll pay down that sum to thee.
They are an old bequest. I may
Not part with them in sportive way."

"No, sire; exchange there can be none;
The prize I claim, and that alone."

"I'll pay it thee in warrior store
In silver, brass, or golden ore;
So they be valued, here in sight
I'll pay thee triple for thy right."

"No, I have said it; and I swear
By the great God whom I revere,
If proffer me thy royal throne,
The prize I'd have, and that alone."

"Then take it thee; and be thou first
He that repents the claim accursed!
If I had ween'd that human might
Could e'er have reft them from my right,
I would have staked a kingdom's worth,
Ere that I valued most on earth.
Ah, hind! thou little art aware
Of what hath fall'n unto thy share!
Curse on these feats of youthful play,
Unmeet for men whose heads are gray!"

MacUiston grasp'd the treasure bright,
And ran, and laugh'd with all his might,
Loud jabbering something 'bout the Sun,
And kingly treasures fairly won;
While many a youth of Albyn's land
Follow'd the wight along the strand,
With clamour vast, and song combined,
Till far upon the wavy wind,
Within the Connel's winding coast,
The loud and jarring sounds were lost.

Fair maid of Albyn's latter day,
How brook'st thou now thy shepherd's lay?
Dost thou not grieve that royal blood
Should yield to vassal's dogged brood?
And grievest thou not that beauteous Hynde
Should in old fortress be confined,
And ne'er appear in martial show,
In proud defiance of her foe?
And, worst of all, the wayward Wene,
That thing of whim, caprice, and bane,
Is lost, transported to the skies,
To Odin's barbarous paradise;
Or borne to place unknown to man,
Save some uncouth, outlandish clan;
While he, the premier of the brave
For maiden's love or warrior's glaive,
Prince Haco of the northern main,
Is lost upon the battle-plain?
Full sorely art thou cross'd, I ween,
In what thou wishedst to have been;
The amends lie not within my power,
But in thine own, beloved flower!

Be this thy lesson; pause, and think.
Fair seraph, leaning o'er the brink
Of sublunary joy and bliss,
The pale of human happiness.
Stretch not too far the boundary o'er,
To prove the sweets that float before,
Or certain is thy virgin meed;
To shed the tear and rue the deed!

Can nought allay that burning thirst
That hath annoyed thee from the first;
That fluttering hope that spurns control;
That yearning of the aspiring soul,
Which gilds the future with a ray
Still brighter than thy present day,
And onward urges thee to strain
For what 'tis ruin to obtain?

Ah! that inherent fault in thee
Has ruin'd worlds, thyself, and me.
While yet thy lovely mould was new,
And pure as dawning's orient dew,
Bright as an angel's form could be,
A flower of immortality;—
Alas! when then thy sacred core
The germs of this impatience bore,
Which ill thy tongue can disavow;
What has thy bard to hope for now?

One grace he asks, a trivial suit,
That thou for once this flame acute
Wilt conquer, and peruse along,
Straight to the end, his epic song,
Else he shall rue it to his cost;
His hope, his little charm is lost.
And can'st thou tarnish by a look
The treasures of his valued book?
Valued alone, when it hath proved
Itself by Scotia's maids beloved.

He once was crown'd by virgin's hand
The laureate of his native land,
While many a noble lady's voice
Lauded along the fond caprice.
By virtue of that office now,
Which maiden dares not disallow,
He hereby, in the sacred names
Of reason, right, and regal claims,
Debars, with due and stern regard,
The following characters unspared
From the plain banquet here prepared:—

First, he debars without redress,
All those of so much frowardness
As yield them to the subtile sway
Of their great foe on primal day,
And, without waiting to contend,
Begin the book at the wrong end,
And read it backward. By his crook,
This is a mode he will not brook!

Next, he debars all those who sew
Their faith unto some stale review;
That ulcer of our mental store,
The very dregs of manly lore;
Bald, brangling, brutal, insincere;
The bookman's venal gazetteer.
Down with the trash, and every gull
That gloats upon their garbage dull!

He next debars (God save the mark!)
All those who read when it is dark;
Boastful of eyesight, harping on,
Page after page in mawkish tone,
And roll the flowing words off-hand,
Yet neither feel nor understand;
All those who read and doze by day,
To while the weary time away;

All maids in love; all jealous wives,
Plague of their own and husbands' lives;
All who have balls and routs to give
Within a fortnight; all who live
In open breach of any rule
Imposed by Calvin's rigid school;
All such as sit alone and weep;
All those who lisp, or talk in sleep;
Who simper o'er a fading flower,
Or sing before the breakfast hour.
All such have more whereof to think,
Than pages marbled o'er with ink;
And I beseech them keep the tone
Of their own thoughts—let mine alone!

All those must next excluded be
Who feel no charm in melody;
That dogged, cold, slow-blooded set,
Who scarce know jig from minuet;
And, what is worse, pretend to love
Some foreign monstrous thing above
Their native measures, sweetly sung
By Scottish maid in Scottish tongue.

He next debars all those who dare,
Whether with proud and pompous air,
With simpering frown, or nose elate,
To name the word INDELICATE!
For such may harp be never strung,
Nor warbling strain of Scotia sung;
But worst of guerdons be her meed,
The garret, poll, and apes to lead:
Such word or term should never be
In maiden's mind of modesty.
But little is the bard afraid
Of thee, to whom this tale is said.

Oft hast thou grieved his heart full sore
With thy sly chat and flippant lore;
Thy emphasis on error small,
And smile, more cutting far than all;
The praise, half compliment, half mock,
The minstrel's name itself a joke!
But yet, for all thy airs and whims,
And lightsome lore the froth that skims,
He must acknowledge in the end
To 've found thee still the poet's friend,
His friend at heart: would jeer and blame;
But aught degrading to his fame
Would ne'er admit, nor join the gall
Of slanders mean and personal;
Therefore I bless thee, and engage
To profit by thy patronage.

Ah, how unlike art thou to those
(Warm friends profess'd, yet covert foes)
Who witness'd, grinning with despite,
A peasant's soul assume its right;
Rise from the dust, and mounting o'er
Their classic toils and boasted lore,
Take its aerial seat on high
Above their buckram fulgency.
In vain each venom'd shaft they tried,
The impartial world was on his side;
Their sport was marr'd—lost was the game—
The halloo hush'd and eke the name!

Then lower stoop'd they for a fee
To poor and personal mockery;
The gait, the garb, the rustic speech,
All that could homely worth appeach,
Unweariedly, time after time,
In loathed and everlasting chime
They vended forth. Who would believe
There were such men? and who not grieve
That they should stoop, by ruthless game,
To stamp their own eternal shame?
While he, the butt of all their mocks,
Sits throned amid his native rocks
Above their reach, and grieves alone
For their unmanly malison.

And so dost thou: the base and mean
Will gloat, and scorn, and scoff, I ween.
So be it. We must now pursue
Our theme, for we have much to do;
And if before the closing measure,
I yield thee not the promised pleasure,
Then must I from my patrons sever,
And give my darlings up for ever.

PART SIXTH.

No Muse was ever invoked by me,
But an uncouth harp of olden key;
And with her have I ranged the Border green,
The Grampians stern, and the starry sheen;
With my gray plaid flapping around the strings,
And ragged coat, with its waving wings;
Yet aye my heart beat light and high
When an air of heaven, in passing by,
Breathed on the mellow chords; and then
I knew it was no earthly strain,
But note of wild mysterious kind,
From some blest land of unbodied mind.
But whence it flew—or whether it came
From the sounding rock or the solar beam,
Or tuneful angels passing away
O'er the bridge of the sky in the showery day,
When the cloudy curtain pervaded the east,
And the sunbeam kiss'd its humid breast—
In vain I look'd to the cloud overhead;
To the echoing mountain dark and dread;
To the sun-fawn fleet, or aerial bow—
I knew not whence were the strains till now.

They were from thee, thou radiant dame,
O'er fancy's region that reign'st supreme;

Thou lovely queen of beauty most bright,
And of everlasting new delight,
Of foible, of freak, of gambol, and glee;
Of all that pleases,
And all that teazes,
All that we fret at, yet love to see
In petulance, pity, and love refined,
Thou emblem extreme of the female mind!

Oh come to my bower here deep in the dell,
Thou queen of the land 'twixt heaven and hell;
Even now thou seest, and smilest to see,
A shepherd kneel on the sward to thee:
But sure thou wilt come with thy gleesome train,
To assist in his last and lingering strain.
Oh come from thy halls of the emerald bright,
Thy bowers of the green and the mellow light,
That shrink from the blaze of the summer noon,
And ope to the light of the modest moon.
Oh well I know the enchanting mien
Of my loved muse, my Fairy Queen!
Her rokely of green, with its sparry hue,
Its warp of the moonbeam and weft of the dew;
Her smile, where a thousand witcheries play,
And her eye, that steals the soul away;
The strains that tell they were never mundane;
And the bells of her palfrey's flowing mane;
For oft have I heard their tinklings light,
And oft have I seen her at noon of the night,
With her beauteous elves in the pale moonlight.

Then, thou who raised'st old Edmund's lay
Above the strains of the olden day;
And waked'st the bard of Avon's theme
To the visions of his midnight dream—
Yea, even the harp that rang abroad
Through all the paradise of God,
And the sons of the morning with it drew,
By thee was remodell'd, and strung anew—
Oh come on thy path of the starry ray,
Thou queen of the land of the gloaming gray,
And the dawning's mild and pallid hue,
From thy valleys beyond the land of the dew,
The realm of a thousand gilded domes,
The richest region that fancy roams!

I have sought for thee in the blue hare-bell,
And deep in the fox-glove's silken cell;
For I fear'd thou hadst drunk of its potion deep,
And the breeze of the world had rock'd thee asleep;
Then into the wild-rose I cast mine eye,
And trembled because the prickles were nigh,
And deem'd the specks on its foliage green
Might be the blood of my Fairy Queen,
Then gazing, wonder'd if blood might be
In an immortal thing like thee.
I have open'd the woodbine's velvet vest,
And sought the hyacinth's virgin breast;
Then anxious lain on the dewy lea,
And look'd to a twinkling star for thee,
That nightly mounted the orient sheen,
Streaming in purple and glowing in green;
And thought, as I eyed its changing sphere,
My Fairy Queen might sojourn there.

Then would I sigh and turn me around,
And lay my ear to the hollow ground,
To the little air-springs of central birth
That bring low murmurs out of the earth;
And there would I listen, in breathless way,
Till I heard the worm creep through the clay,
And the little blackamoor pioneer
A-grubbing his way in darkness drear:
Nought cheer'd me on which the daylight shone,
For the children of darkness moved alone.
Yet neither in field nor in flowery heath,
In heaven above nor in earth beneath,
In star, nor in moon, nor in midnight wind,
His elfish queen could her minstrel find.

But now I have found thee, thou vagrant thing,
Though where I neither dare say nor sing!
For it was in a home so passing fair,
That an angel of light might have linger'd there:
I found thee playing thy freakish spell
Where the sun never shone, and the rain never fell,
Where the ruddy cheek of youth ne'er lay,
And never was kiss'd by the breeze of day;
It was sweet as the woodland breeze of even,
And pure as the star of the western heaven,
As fair as the dawn of the sunny east,
And soft as the down of the solan's breast.

Yes, now have I found thee, and thee will keep,
Though thy spirits yell on the midnight steep;
Though the earth should quake when nature is still,
And the thunders growl in the breast of the hill;
Though the moon should frown through a pall of
gray,
And the stars fling blood on the Milky Way;
Since now I have found thee, I'll hold thee fast,
Till thou garnish my song—it is the last!

Sing of the dreary gloom that hung
Clouding the brows of old and young
Through all the Scandinavian host,
And on the monarch press'd the most,
Who was of direful dreams the prey;
Some bodings of an olden day,
That told of trouble and of teen,
Of late fulfill'd had darkly been;
Foil'd by a hind before his host,
His consecrated armour lost,
That held a charm he valued more
Than aught his ample kingdom bore.
His scowl bespoke his heart's dismay,
And bore with it decisive sway;
For when in temper he was cross'd,
His was the mood of all the host.

Captain pass'd brother captain by,
Paused, beckon'd, waiting some reply;
But there was none, save look that spoke
Of direful deed; no hint was broke;

But all perceived the army's mood
Foreboded tumult, reif, and blood.

Well did they bode; the order flew;
King Eric out his legions drew,
Ranging his grim and hardy files
Around old Selma's stately piles.
In armour bright he walk'd alone
Before his host, and bade lead on
To force the Connel and the Croy,
To waste, to ravage, and destroy,
With fire and sword, and foray keen,
And none to save but Albyn's queen.

Then waked his trumpet's brazen throat,
With such a copious rending note,
That rocks and doons began to pant;
The gray and solid adamant
Travail'd in anguish with the noise,
With the first throes of thunder voice,
And issued sounds that shook the spheres,
And silence of a thousand years.

Short was the march along the coast,
Till, lo, a herald met the host!
The same that first its rage appeased
Now came to have his bond released;
Scotland's apostle there once more
Opposed King Eric on the shore.

The king at first in high disdain
Answer'd the sage, and scarce would deign
Exchange of speech; but such a grace
Shone in Columba's saintly face,
That Eric calm'd, and stay'd his van
To listen to the reverend man.

"Sire, I was call'd to distant shore,
Which caused the breach we all deplore;
On God's own mission forth I went,
To save this Christian throne intent:
My purpose fail'd, but then, as now,
I trusted Heaven, and must avow
Our nobles' fraud. Fearful, I ween,
Of parting with their youthful queen,
They have done that which monarch must
Declare right generous, though unjust;
They knew not Eric's honour high,
And now regret it grievously,
But must be pardon'd. List then me—
You've fought and conquer'd three to three;
But still your victory is not won,
Nor can be, ere to-morrow's sun
See Albyn's champions once more beat,
And then we yield us to our fate.
Our queen, with Scotia's coronet,
Shall on the combat field be set,
And whoso wins shall wear that crown,
And claim the maiden as his own:
She cannot wed all three, 'tis true,
But to her choice the three must bow."

The king grinn'd in derision proud,
And shook his beard, and said aloud—
"Thou say'st? Then, shall my champions be
Men not endow'd to cope with me
In maiden's love? Of monstrous form,
I've plenty, thanks to clime and storm,
That are, for all their spurious brood,
A match for aught of Albyn's blood.
But, carping wizard as thou art!
Com'st thou again to act a part
Of wheedling fraud, to chant and chime,
And gain a blink of loathsome time?
To practise some unholy scheme,
Some low and servile stratagem?
I say it boldly to thy face—
There is no chief of Albyn's race
Dares for his soul presume to stand
And brave again this deadly brand:
Thou know'st it, churl, as well as I:
Vile Christian! I thy power defy!
Thee and thy gods I hold as dust,
And in this arm and Odin's trust."

"Say'st thou we dare not, sire? why then
Came I thus forth from Scotia's queen
These words to say? Hath she, as thou,
Swerved from her holy plighted vow,
And, without warning or pretence,
In savage stormy insolence,
Broke on thy ranks with havoc red?
No! such is not the Christian's creed.
Thou'rt the aggressor—doubly so:
This thou hast done, and, ere I go,
I'll say, if 'twere my latest breath,
Thou dar'st not fight and keep thy faith!"

"Worm! reptile! dolt! What dost thou say,
Thou clod of cold presumptuous clay?
Dares such a being, sear'd and knurl'd,
Beard Eric of the northern world,
Whose arm has quench'd the Saxon's light,
And broke the German's iron might;
The Pole and Paynim overrun,
And beat the blue and bloody Hun?
Dar'st thou, in name of Christian cur,
Or virgin young, these honours blur?
He tells thee once again, and swears
By Odin's self, who sees and hears
This lifted hand, and solemn vow,
He'll fight your champions brow to brow:
And if none dares his arm withstand,
He'll fight the best two of your land.
Chiefs, kinsmen, sheathe your swords to-day
In peace, and measure back the way
Straight to the camp. If Odin speed,
To-morrow sees your sovereign's head
Circled by Albyn's ancient crown,
And honours of supreme renown!"

Columba bow'd as it behoved,
But smiled to see the monarch moved

To such a towering tempest pride,
Which scarce to reason seem'd allied;
And as he gazed in Eric's face,
Some thoughts like these his mind did trace:—

"I've touch'd the proper peg that winds
That high-toned string of mortal minds
Up to the height! Oh, God of Life!
Why mad'st thou man a thing of strife,
Of pride, and lust, of power so high
That scarcely quails beneath the sky!
Yet a poor pin, a scratch, a thrust
Can bring his honours to the dust,
And lay the haughty godlike form
A fellow to the crawling worm!
I've sped; but thou alone can'st know
Whether I've sped for weal or woe;
O thou To-Morrow! who can see
What joy or sorrow waits on thee!"

The seer retired, but quickly stay'd,
And turning short, to Eric said—
"Sire, I request, before I go,
From thy own lips this thing to know—
Where be the maidens that were sent
As hostages unto thy tent?
For they were noble maids each one:
Then say, without evasion,
Where they are now, for words are said
Which tend thy honour to upbraid,
And manhood too. Then pr'ythee, tell,
Where be the maids we love so well?"

Eric look'd grave; his towering pride
'Gan in a moment to subside;
His speech sunk to a hollow calm,
And his pale lip bespoke a qualm
Of conscience, whilst these words he spoke:
"By all the gods, and dreadful Lok,
I know not—dare not hint a dread
Into what clime their fate is sped;
They are where they are call'd to be
By the Great King of Heaven's decree!"

"Sire, I have nothing from this speech,
Vague as the voice on ocean's beach,
Of sounding billow bursting in
With harsh unmodulated din:
If thou hast dared such foul offence
As injure virgin innocence,
The curse of Heaven be on thy head!
Hence be thy valour pall'd in dread,
And all thy pomp and power decay——"

"Withhold thy dread anathema,"
King Eric cried; "I'd rather brave
The rage of Albyn's winter wave;
Her tempests wild, her headlands stern;
Her friths so crooked, dark, and dern;
Her nation's force in rear and van,
Than the vile curse of Christian man!

"Bring forth these champions of your land,
That mine may meet them brand to brand:
I dare them; if that will not do,
I'll fight the cravens one to two:
Thou hast my answer—speed thee hence
And for thy nation's best defence
Be thou prepared; for if the queen
To grace the combat is not seen,
I swear by Odin's warlike name,
And Thor's, the god of storm and flame,
No lists shall be, nor warrior boast;
I'll pour my vengeance on your host,
And neither leave you root nor stem,
Memorial, name, nor diadem."

Columba raised his hand on high,
About to make sublime reply;
But Eric to his trumpets' blare
Wheel'd off, and left the father there,
Like statue raised by wizard charm,
With open mouth—with out-stretched arm—
Forehead uplifted to the sky,
And beard projecting potently.

There stood the seer, with breath drawn in,
And features bended to begin;
But, lo! ere he a word could say,
The king had wheel'd and sped away!
The sire relax'd his form the while,
His features softening to a smile;
And back he strode in thoughtfulness,
To tell the queen of his success.

He found her deck'd in youthful pride,
And blithesome as a maiden bride,
Resolved to trust her royal right
Unto her doughty kinsmen's might.
Despite of all her lords could say,
Who urged her from the lists to stay,
She vow'd the combat she should see,
And trust to Heaven's ascendency.

Columba's prayers and counsels wise
Had from despondence clear'd her eyes;
While something he had said or done,
Unto all living else unknown,
Had raised her hopes to such a height,
They almost had outrun the right;
For aught her court could see or deem,
They were even forward in the extreme.
No matter! Hynde felt no annoy,
But of the combat talk'd with joy;
And of the manner she would greet
King Eric kneeling at her feet,
Or raise the chief that should him slay
Unto her throne that self-same day.

These rash resolves could not be lost
To any part of Albyn's host;
For all were summon'd to appear
That dared to stand the test severe;
While highest honours were decreed
To those whose valour should succeed
In saving Albyn's rights and laws;
That highest, most momentous cause

For which a hero ever fought,
Or sovereign hero's aid besought.

The evening came, and still no knight
Had proffer'd life for Scotia's right.
The morning rose in shroud of gray,
That usher'd in the pregnant day,
Big with the germs of future fame,
Of Albyn's glory or her shame;
And still no champion made demand
Of fighting for his sovereign's hand!

Just as the morn began to shower
Its radiance on Dunstaffnage tower,
Queen Hynde, array'd in robes of state,
Descended by the southern gate,
With face that own'd no hid distress,
But smiled in angel loveliness;
And there, amid the assembled crowd,
A herald thus proclaim'd aloud:

"Here stands our virgin queen alone,
The sole support of Albyn's throne,
Craving the aid of hero's might,
To guard her and her sacred right.
If any here dares wield a sword
'Gainst Scandinavia's sovereign lord,
Or champions of his giant band,
Let such approach our sovereign's hand,
And tender here his envied claim,
That so enroll'd may be his name;
And Scotia's banners may not fly
O'er lists where none dares for her die;
The right, and left, and post between,
Must fall by lot—God save the Queen!"

Still there was none that forward press'd;
Then first Queen Hynde's wan looks confess'd
An inward pang allied to fear,
A disappointment hard to bear;
Till Saint Columba by her side,
With locks of silver waving wide,
And spread hands quivering in the air,
Thus to the heavens preferr'd his prayer:

"O thou Almighty One, whose throne
O'erlooks Eternity alone!
Who once, in deep humility,
Lay cradled on a virgin's knee,
Turn here thine eyes on one whose face
Bespeaks the virtues of her race—
Who in this time of dire alarm
Puts not her trust in human arm,
But in thy mercy and thy truth;—
Then, oh! in pity to her youth,
Preserve her to her native land;
Save the dear maid of thy right hand,
And rouse up heroes that may quell
The pride of braggart infidel.

"Yes, thou wilt grant thy aid divine
To those who stand for thee and thine;
Wilt steel their hearts and guard their heads,
Till of their high and glorious deeds
Their everlasting rocks shall ring,
And bards unborn their honours sing."

Then bow'd the saint his brow serene,
And tens of thousands said—AMEN!

The bugle's note and herald's voice
Proffer'd again the exalted choice
To every youth of noble mind,
To chief, to yeoman, and to hind,
Of fighting in his country's name,
For royalty and deathless fame:
Then up came courteous Sutherland,
And, kneeling, kiss'd his sovereign's hand,
Proffer'd his arm, his sword, his life,
To combat in the glorious strife;
Saying, he delay'd the honour dear,
In hopes that better would appear:
Then drew his lot, and fell the right,
To fight with Eric's left-hand knight.

Red Gaul of Ross came up the next,
And said these words with voice perplex'd:—
"My beauteous liege, I stood aloof,
In hopes some lord of more approof
Would eagerly rush forth to throw
The gauntlet to our reckless foe;
But, as I am, for Albyn's good
I dedicate my sword and blood."

"I know full well, my generous lord,
No braver chief e'er drew a sword,"
The queen replied. "To such as thee
I well can trust my throne and me.
Now to the test, the final lot,
Whether you fight the king or not."—
He drew the left, and thereupon
To fight King Eric there was none.

From Hynde's dark eye, that glisten'd clear,
Was seen to drop the briny tear;
While yet a soften'd smile of pain,
Like sunbeam through the morning rain,
Unto her lords seem'd to confess
Their want of noble generousness.
Still good Columba cheer'd her on,
And bade her trust in Christ alone,
Who could his sacred pledge redeem
Even in their last and great extreme.

But time there was no more to say,
The boats were gather'd in the bay,
And the decisive hour drew near
When Hynde must in the lists appear.
On board she went in joyless mood:
An hundred barges plough'd the flood;
While many a bold and warlike strain
Of music peal'd along the main,
That seem'd to say, in daring tone,
"Here comes the Queen of Caledon!
Who dares her royal rights gainsay?
Hie, braggarts, to your wastes away,
For, fume and banter as you will,
Old Albyn shall be Albyn still!"

Alas! what variance God hath seen
Between man's heart and outward mien!

It was a gorgeous sight that day,
When Hynde arrived in Keila Bay,
On high above her maidens borne,
Like radiant streamer of the morn;
A ray of pure and heavenly light,
Shining in gold and diamonds bright:
A lovelier thing of human frame
From armies never drew acclaim,
Or look'd more queenly and serene,
As, heaving o'er the billow's mane,
An hundred barges her behind
Came rippling on before the wind;
And, as they sunk the waves between,
Seem'd paying homage to their queen.
Such freight ne'er sail'd on western sea;
A thousand dames of high degree,
With lords and gallants many a one,
Came with the Queen of Caledon.

The lists were framed and fenced around
With palisades on level ground;
And these again were lined the while
With warriors, rank'd in triple file.
Upon the east was raised a throne,
Where Hynde in all her beauty shone;
And dames unnumber'd, on each side,
Shone o'er the lists in blooming pride;
Their tartans streaming, row on row,
Bright as the tints of heavenly bow.

Sure 'twas a fair and goodly view!
Even Eric's dull and swarthy crew,
Whose minds had been bred up in broil,
Inured to blood and battle toil,
Acknowledged beauty's power supreme,
By looks of wonder's last extreme.
There one with half a glance might spy
The gaping mouth and gazing eye,
The turgid blink, the scowl askance,
The sterile stare, the amorous glance;
The thousand looks that utterance found
In language mightier than in sound.
Ah, Beauty! but for woman's mien
And form, thy name had never been!

When all the wonted forms were past,
The judges' rules, the warning blast,
King Eric and his champions twain
Enter'd the lists the first again;
And there, in daring martial pride,
Walk'd round the ring with stately stride.
Brave Sutherland appear'd at length,
And Gaul, a burly mass of strength,
Gnarl'd and misshaped from toe to chin;
But, ah! the soul, that frame within,
Was pure, and brave, and calm, and just—
A pearl amid a coil of dust.

There was a pause; the champions eyed
Each other well, and talk'd aside;
Queen Hynde grew wan as winter snows,
Then ruddy as the damask rose,
As far she cast her humid eye,
O'er serried thousands crowding nigh;
But none rush'd in—(O hour of shame!)
To save his queen from foreign claim.

'Twas said, the bugle blasts between
Columba's lips were moving seen,
And his dim eyes to Heaven up-cast,
As that dumb prayer had been his last.
Oh read not dumb! What speech can feign
The language of a soul in pain?
That prayer, though made in deep distress,
Was not by creature succourless;
For, beaming from his faded eye,
There shot a ray of hope on high.

First to the queen King Eric kneel'd;
Then to the judges of the field
He turn'd, and said, "'Tis past the hour;
I claim my mistress and her dower.
Produce three champions of your land,
Or give my bride into my hand.
The pledge is forfeited. Think'st thou
We three will shed the blood of two?
No, by the gods!—But I alone
Shall fight that couple one by one;
Grant this, and I by it abide;
If not, then bring me forth my bride;
Or, by yon heaven, and burning hell,
And all that in both regions dwell,
In carnage red I'll pen a law,
Such as your nation never saw!"

"Hold, sire!" cried one of Scottish blood,
"This hasty challenge is not good;
The hour's not sped by half at least;
The shadow falls not to the east.
Yon arched oriel casement mark;
When its armorial rim grows dark,
The hour is past; till then 'tis meet
That thou should'st wait in mode discreet,
Since Albyn's hero's bold intent
Is thwarted by some strange event;
So it would seem: remain awhile,
Till once the shadow from the pile
Falls eastward; then, with woeful heart,
Old Albyn from her queen must part."

To Selma's tower looked one and all;
The sunbeam stray'd aslant the wall,
In scatter'd fragments, pointed bright,
Though scarce one hundredth part was light;
But still the casement's carved frame
Shone with a bright and yellow flame.
Each Scottish eye, as by a charm,
Fixed on that tower in wild alarm,
Till every little gilded mark
Vanish'd amid the shadow dark;
Save that the casement's arch alone
With dim and fading lustre shone.

The last ray of the lingering sun
Is verging thence—the prize is won!

Columba rose, but not alone,
To lead the queen down from the throne,
And give her to the imperious hand
Of the oppressor of the land:
The tears stream'd o'er her pallid cheek.
She look'd abroad, but could not speak.
Then many a stifled groan was heard,
From breasts that were but ill prepared
To yield their queen to such a fate;
Ten thousand swords were drawn too late;
One moment, and the prize is won—
'Tis past.—The will of God be done!

What gathering shout is that begun?
Toward the lists it seems to run!
It heightens, gains, and swells around;
The skies are shaken with the sound,
While dancing swords and plumes give way,
Bespeaking tumult or deray.
Queen Hynde in middle step stood still,
Her sponsors paused with right good-will,
And Eric stepp'd aside to see
What meant that loud temerity.
That moment through the lists there sprung
A warrior, stalwart, lithe, and young,
Cover'd with foam and ocean brine,
And blood upon his brigantine;
Then pointing to the oriel frame,
That still was tinged with fading flame,
He cried, "Behold all is not lost!
I make appeal to Eric's host."

"No! to himself thou shalt appeal,
To him who never yet did fail
On such request to yield a foe,
Or friend, or kinsman blow for blow!"
King Eric said: "Here's fame for thee
To win. Thou art the man for me
To match! for rarely have I seen
A comelier warrior tread the green!
Woe's me, for such a blooming spray
Which I must level with the clay!"

"Yes, I'm for thee!" that warrior said,
And threw away his belted plaid;
And lo! his panoply was braced
With belts of gold, and interlaced
With many a fringe and mottled hem,
Where lurk'd the ruby's burning gem.
Such princely champion ne'er before
Had gauntlet thrown on Albyn's shore!

Out through the host a whisper ran,
Which said he was no earthly man,
But angel sent from God on high,
To help in great extremity.
Others there were, who said he bore
Semblance to Haco, now no more;
So lithe, so brisk, so void of fear,
So brilliant in his warlike gear.

A ray of hope, like wildfire's gleam,
From maidens' eyes began to beam;
But in the eye of warrior grim
That ray of hope was deadly dim.
Ah! how could youth, whate'er his worth,
Excel great Eric of the north,
Whose arm had spread, through human kind,
Dismay before and death behind?

Forthwith the deadly strife began;
Clash went the weapons, man to man.
Harold of Elle, a Danish knight,
Was match'd with Gaul, on Eric's right;
And Hildemor, from Bothnia's strand,
Was match'd with seemly Sutherland;
Gigantic heroes, bred to strife,
And combat yearly for their life.

In that fierce onset to the fray
There was no flout nor giving way;
To work they fell, with blow and thrust,
And strokes that shore the level dust
From shields descending. Then, anon,
Flickering in air their weapons shone,
With crossing clang so fierce and high,
As if the javelins of the sky,
The livid lightnings, at their speed,
Had met and quiver'd o'er each head.

But soon both wings, as with assent,
Paused, and stood still, to gaze intent
On the tremendous strife that grew,
'Twixt Eric and his foeman new.
Such rabid rage on combat field,
No human eye had e'er beheld;
They tried to wound, but ne'er below,
Round, round they battled, toe to toe,
But not one inch would either flee;
They fought on foot—they fought on knee—
Against each other fiercely flung;
They clang'd, they grappled, and they swung,
They fought e'en stretch'd upon the green,
Though streams of blood ran them between.

Thou ne'er hast seen the combat grand
Of two wild steeds of southern land,
Rivals in love: how grows their rage,
And shakes the fen when they engage;
Or two wild bulls of bison brood,
The milk-white sovereigns of the wood—
And the dire echoes that outyell
The grovelling, bellowing sounds of hell:
To view these savages aloof,
Rending the ground with horn and hoof,
Or meet to gore, and foam, and die,
Is scarce a sight for maiden's eye.
Or two huge monsters of the wave
Rearing their forms, with lash and lave,
Far up the air; their snort and howl—
Then, grappling, sink with groan and growl,
While the red ocean boils ahight,
And nature sickens at the sight,

Such wars have been since Eden's day,
When thou first err'd, and peace gave way;
Yes, such dread scenes have often been,
Though such thine eye hath never seen;
And if thou hadst, as nought they were
Unto the mortal combat there,
Where heroes toiled in deadly strife,
For love, for empire, and for life.

It was as if two Alpine hills,
Lords of a thousand rocks and rills,
And sovereigns of the cloudy clime,
Had once in battle join'd sublime;
Together dash'd their mighty heads,
Those gray and grisly pyramids,
The footstools to the gates of heaven:
Think of them shatter'd, torn, and riven,
And down the shrieking steeps beneath,
Red rolling o'er a waste of death.

Such was the strife, while every heart
Around them bore a trembling part.
Ah! many an eye was dimm'd of sight,
When, in the terrors of their might,
They saw the heroes grappling fast,
And deem'd each struggle was the last;
But no! They seem'd two beings framed
Not to be wounded, foil'd, or maim'd.

Three times they closed within the shield;
Twice roll'd they down upon the field;
But then, 'gainst Eric was the odds,
They heard him cursing by his gods!
And when they parted for a space,
A wildness glared in Eric's face;—
A haggard rage not to be told,
A something dreadful to behold.

'Twas as if spirit from the earth,
Proud of its righteousness and worth,
Had hurried to the gates on high,
Passing poor pensive journeyers by;
But lo! when at the gates above,
The paradise of peace and love,
He finds all entrance there denied,
And the poor ghost is thrust aside;
Barr'd from the presence of his God,
And banish'd to some drear abode,
In darkness and in chains to lie
Through ages of eternity.
Think of that spirit's woeful case,
The lines of his deploring face,
And livid hues 'twixt black and wan,
And think of Eric if you can!

This dread expression was not miss'd
By the eye of his antagonist,
Who, without wooing strength or breath,
Rushed in for victory or death.
But Eric still withstood his shock;
He fought, a tower, a strength, a rock,
That ne'er had bowed unto the blast,
And knew no yielding till the last.

At length their motions grew more slow,
Their swords fell lighter every blow;
And all perceiv'd they near'd the last,
And the bitterness of death was past:
On swords that bent and stream'd with blood,
They lean'd, and stagger'd as they stood;
Yet grimly levell'd eye to eye,
And not one inch would either fly.
The conflict's o'er—wild tremor reigns,
And stillness for a space remains.

King Eric was the first that fell:
Down like a tower with groan and knell
The prince of heroes falls supine!
A shudder pass'd through Norway's line,
Yet none durst enter in the list,
Although upon the monarch's breast
The foot of conquering foe was set,
And sword upraised in vengeful threat,
His royal head and trunk to sever,
And close his conquests up for ever.
None interfered, nor call'd it crime,
Such were the statutes of the time.

But fate withheld the stroke design'd,
For, like the willow in the wind,
The conqueror's plume began to bow,
And nod and totter to and fro;
Then back he stagger'd on the field,
Low bending o'er his sword and shield;
And ere his panting breath was gone,
He reach'd the rail and lean'd thereon;
Then hands were stretch'd (why should they not?)
That loosed his gorget from his throat;
His helm and corslet they untie,
And all his belted panoply;
And though no mortal wound they saw,
The blood oozed through at every flaw.[1]

The champions on the field that stood,
Still gazing on the deadly feud,
Now, without languor or remark,
Flew to the combat stern and stark;
When, strange to tell! the lord of Ross,
The warrior shapeless, gnarl'd, and gross,

[1] The following short translation from an ancient Runic ode, was handed me by a correspondent, as probably relating to the death of this northern hero:—

"Before Berigholmi did we fight with swords. We held bloody shields, and well-stained spears. Thick around the shores lay the scattered dead. There saw I thousands lie dead by the ships. We sailed seven days to the battle in which our army fell.

"We fought again; and then the bow uttered a twanging sound, sending forth tempests of glittering steel. It was at the time of the evening the foe was compelled to fly. The King of Erin did not act the part of the eagle—he fell by the bay. He was given for a feast to the ravens. A great storm descended. O ye sons of the fallen warriors! who among you shall tell of the issue of that dreadful day? The gods were angry, and before their vengeance who shall stand? THERE ERIC FELL, than whom there was no greater king. The sword dropped from his hand—the lofty helmet was laid low—the birds of prey bewailed him who prepared their banquets."

So hardly press'd the giant Dane,
That round and round upon the plain
He made him shift and shun the strife,
Then fairly turn and fly for life.
Gaul follow'd; but as well he might
Have chased the red deer on the height,
As his tall enemy, that strode
Slow round the field with taunt and nod;
Gaul waddling after, sword in hand,
Puffing, and cursing him to stand;
Loud rang the shouts around the pale,
And laughter gibber'd on the gale.

On the other hand the strife was sore
'Twixt Sutherland and Hildemor;
It was a combat to be seen,
If premier combat had not been,
To which all others, when compared,
Sunk into things of no regard.
Keen was the strife—the Scot gave way.
Either in need or galliard play;
And, as he wore across the field,
They reach'd a spot of blood congeal'd,
Where, as the Swede rush'd on his foe,
He slid, and stumbled with the blow;
When Sutherland, with ready slight,
Met in his fall the hapless wight,
And pierced the corslet and the core
Of the redoubted Hildemor:
He roll'd in blood, and aptly tried
To stem the red and rushing tide;
Then feebly at his foeman struck,
And cursed his gods for his misluck:
The accents gurgled in his throat—
Still moved the tongue, but speech was not;
And, with a spurn and hideous growl,
Out fled the giant's murky soul.

Now, two to one, the flying Dane
In gnashing terror scower'd the plain;
His king and his companion gone,
A madness seized the knight upon;
He tried to leap the circling piles,
For shelter 'mid the Danish files,
But was repulsed with fierce disdain,
And thrown back headlong on the plain:
No hope thus left him in the strife,
He kneel'd to Gaul, and begg'd for life.

"No," said the chief; "it may not be;
The devil waits dinner for the three!
Henceforth with earth thou hast no tie,
The man is damn'd that dreads to die:
But one relief for thee is left,
And, here it is." With that he cleft
The stalwart craven to the brow,
Severing his ample brain in two.

"Beshrew thee for a bloody Scot,
If thou'st not done what I could not!"
Said Sutherland, as turning by—
But seeing the tear in Ross's eye,
And sorrow on his nut-brown cheek
So deep that word he could not speak,
The burly chief he kindly press'd
Unto his bold and kindred breast.

The day now won, a wild dismay
Blench'd every cheek of Norroway!
The list now oped to Odin's priest,
Who ran to have his king released;
Upraised his huge and fainting frame,
And comfort spoke in Odin's name;
While leeches plied with license brief,
But, ah! the case was past relief!
Seven deadly wounds, and all before,
Told them great Eric's reign was o'er,
Still, not one sentence he had spoke,
But whisper'd o'er the name of Lok.
Lok! Lok! that name of terror hung
Alone upon his dying tongue.

One told him that, on Albyn's side,
Detraction had a tale supplied
Of a low hind, MacUiston named,
Who not even birth or lineage claim'd,
Yet had achieved this wondrous deed,
Laid low in dust that royal head,
And dared, even on his great acquest,
To set his foot on Eric's breast!

When this the hero heard, he roll'd
And writh'd, as if in serpent's hold;
And from his motions it was plain
He deem'd he fought the field again;
While, from his eye's impassion'd gleam
And smile of fury, it did seem
He thought his fame he could redeem.

At length, with throbbings long and deep,
Calm as a child about to sleep,
That softly lifts imploring eye
Unto the face of parent nigh,
So lay, so look'd, in piteous case,
That terror of the human race;
And so must all the achievements vast
Of this poor world end at the last.
He stretch'd the priest his hand to hold;
That hand was bloody, glued, and cold;
While these last words hung on his breath,
"Appease the gods!—Revenge my death!"

Leave we the uproar and distress
Which Norway's chiefs could ill suppress;
And pass we over, for a while,
To Hynde, the flower of Albyn's isle,
Who saw, with joy ne'er felt before,
Her gallant champion Eiden More
Upraise his pale and wounded head,
Like beauteous phantom from the dead,
And wipe his bloody brow, and say
The faintness quite had pass'd away;
For untried armour wrought the harm,
And not the force of Eric's arm.

The nobles now, with clamorous glee,
Brought to the queen the conquering three,
And bade her choose a sovereign lord,
With whom they all should well accord:
So was she bound in her distress,
And in th' event could not do less.
The courtly Sutherland look'd down,
As guessing well to whom the crown
Was destined. As for Eiden More
(Or poor MacUiston, call'd before),
Leaning and pale he took his stand,
And turn'd his eyes on Sutherland,
As one his sovereign soon to be;
But burly Gaul fell on his knee,
And said, with sly and waggish whine,
"My liege, I hope the chance is mine!"

The queen descended to the green
With lightsome step, but solemn mien;
And, passing Ross and Sutherland,
She took MacUiston by the hand,
And, with a firm unalter'd voice,
Said, "Here I make my maiden choice.
Since thou hast come without a meed
To save me in my utmost need;
And sure, though humbly born, thou art
A prince and hero at the heart;
So, next my Saviour that's above,
Hence thee I'll honour, bless, and love."

MacUiston's cheek grew pale as snow,
And the cold drops fell from his brow;
He raised his blood-stain'd hand, and seem'd
About to speak; and, as they deem'd,
He meant his sovereign to dissuade,
And disapprove of all was said:
But ere a word his tongue could frame,
Forward rush'd lord, and noble dame,
And chief, and squire, in courteous way,
Due homage to their king to pay.
For all extoll'd, with ready tongue,
The bravery of a hind so young;
And vow'd by such a hero's hand
In utmost danger firm to stand.
With prayers, and vows, and blessings said,
The crown was set upon his head;
Then shouts ascended on the wind,
"Long live King Eiden and Queen Hynde!"

Need was there for a leader brave,
For Norway's host, like wave on wave,
Began to move with backward motion,
Like tide receding on the ocean;
Only to come with double sway,
Resistless, on its sounding way.

The king's last words had moved the host
To grief and rage the uttermost;
And without head to rule the whole,
The tumult grew without control.
Distant from home, and in command
Of the great bulwark of the land,
The soldiers swore that land to have,
Or of green Albyn make a grave;
Even Odin's priest approved the choice,
And only ask'd for sacrifice.

"Now is the time!" the soldiers cried,
"While Albyn's army is employ'd
In joyful rite, and must repass
Yon straits with all their force in mass!"—
The chiefs gave way, and join'd the flame,
For why, their notions were the same;
And thus their army moved away
To set the battle in array.

Eiden, the new-made king, beheld
The movements on the adverse field;
And cried, in firm commanding tone,
"Each Scottish leader, straight begone,
And range your clans these columns under,
For, lo, a storm is gathering yonder!
And, if maturely I foresee,
Dreadful the breaking out will be.

"Meantime, let all the dames of birth
Speed to the boats and cross the firth;
For, in such dangers, woman still
Is a dead weight on warrior's will.
Dread not our strength, though some may scoff,
There's help at hand you wot not of;
Mine be the chance to lead the van,
And fight on foot the foremost man;
Stranger I am to take command;
But, as my guardians on each hand,
I choose forth Ross and Sutherland.

"Haste! there is not a moment's speed
To lose, else we shall rue the deed.
See that these orders be obey'd,
And promptly. If they are delay'd
By any here, better his head
Had been laid low among the dead!"

The lords were almost stunn'd to death:
They stared and gasp'd as if for breath.
"What's this," said they; "A peasant's son
Speak thus to chiefs of Caledon!
Better we had our deed revoke,
Than bow our necks to such a yoke!"

Eiden perceived that they demurr'd,
And, heaving high his mighty sword,
Which token gave of lustihood,
Bestain'd with Eric's royal blood—
"My lords," said he, "the danger's nigh,
Who's to command—Is't you or I?—
By your award the right is mine;
When you ordain it, I resign.
But my commands are given to-day,
And he that dares to disobey——
I *say* no more—submission's best—
If more must be, I'll *do* the rest."

One of M'Ola's haughty race,
Who held and ruled the forest chase,

Along the lofty hills that lie
'Twixt Lochy's side and Kyle-an-righ,
By sad mischance a speech began
To this resolved, impatient man;
A speech that tended more t' inflame
Proud opposition than to tame.

King Eiden stepp'd across the space,
With scowl portentous on his face;
And in the midst of all his kin
He clove the chieftain to the chin.
"If more such speeches be to say,
We'll hear them out some other day.
This moment's ours—the next, I wis,
Is his who best improveth this."
He said, and, heaving his claymore,
Resumed the stand he held before.

The chiefs were awed at such control;
Such energy of frame and soul
They ne'er had witness'd among men,
Far less in upstart denizen;
Still there were some aloof that stood,
Unused to yield to vassal blood.

Just at that instant, through the array
A troop of strangers burst their way;
Led by an ancient chief, who rode
A stately steed, with silver shod:
And oh that chief was stern to view!
His robe was crimson set with blue;
While on his head, like spheral crown,
Stood broad and belted chaperon:
His face was bent like curve of bow;
His hair as white as Alpine snow;
His gray beard, quivering with disdain,
Hung mingled with his horse's mane.

Soon as he spied King Eiden stand,
With bloody sword rear'd in his hand,
He cried, "Ah, varlet! Do I see
Thee where I swore thou should'st not be?
How darest thou rear that bloody glaive
Before my face, thou saucy knave?
Hast thou been at thy old misdeeds
Of breaking swords and splitting heads?
Thy mad temerity confess'd
Hath drawn an old man from his rest.
Curs'd knave! I have thee at the last!
Seize on him, friends, and bind him fast!"

"Hold, dearest sire, for mercy's sake!
The time is precious; all's at stake.
To-day I have a task to do;
To-morrow at thy feet I'll bow."

"Ah, thoughtless, froward, frantic boy!
Thou'st come to combat for a toy;
To fight with one will put thee down,
And for a foe that wears thy crown.
But I'll prevent it. Ne'er shall man
Before my face thy youth trepan.
Seize on the stripling, I command;
I'll bind him with this aged hand!"

"Sire, I've already fought and won;
The great decisive deed is done.
This day thy grandson's hand hath slain
Great Eric of the northern main;
Hath gained for thee supreme renown,
And won my father's ancient crown;
And, what is more than power or fame,
I've won the flower of all our name!"

"What! Thou, young caglet of the rock!
Brave scion of a noble stock!
Hast thou our sister realms set free
Of their relentless enemy?
The man who hath for twenty years
Kept us in terror and in tears;
Who all despite to me hath done;
Hath slain my kinsmen one by one;
And my two sons, too rashly brave,
Brought both to an untimely grave?
Ah! knave and vagrant as thou art,
Come let me hold thee to my heart!

"Ye chiefs of Albyn, cease your noise
List Colmar King of Erin's voice!
This is your prince whom I embrace,
The flower of all our royal race;
King Eugene's son of soul refined,
And cousin to your sovereign Hynde;
MacUiston's both, as you know well,
And that old dotard monk can tell.
The truant fled me in disguise,
To seek adventures most unwise;
I follow'd, and sent men away
To seize him ere the combat-day,
Who last night found him in his bed:
He slew my officers and fled!
And, in despite of earth and hell,
Has done this day what you can tell.

"Yet he hath that which man exalts,
For all his foibles and his faults:
Oh, he is brave! most nobly brave!
Forgive these tears; I love the knave!
And here to Albyn's fair command
I join the crown of Erin's land.

"Fear not the north's huge power combined;
I have ten thousand men behind;
Who, with Prince Eiden at their head,
Such havoc and deray shall breed
'Mongst that detested brutal host,
Glad shall they be to leave your coast."

Then the old pagan moved his crown
From off his head, and kneel'd him down,
And thus, with reverend lifted eye,
Address'd his bright divinity:

"Thou glorious SUN, my father's god,
Look down from thy sublime abode

On thy old servant's sacred joy,
And bless this brave and blooming boy:
Not with the common light of day
Be thou director of his way,
But on his inward spirit shine
With light empyreal and divine;
For thousands on his reign's success
Depend for mortal happiness.

"And when thou leav'st thy heavenly path,
To sojourn in the realms beneath,
Be charges of him nightly given
Unto thy lovely Queen of Heaven;
Who, with serene and modest face,
Watches above the human race,
And sways by visions of dismay
The spirits prone to go astray;
For 'tis not hidden from thy sight,
That dangers of the silent night,
Dangers of women's witching smile,
Of wassail, wake, and courtier's wile,
Far deadlier are to virtuous sway
Than all the perils of the day.

"And now, thou source of light and love,
Great Spirit of all things that move
If thou wilt hearken to my prayer,
I'll such a sacrifice prepare,
As ne'er on beal-day morn did smoke
Beneath thy own vicegerent oak.

"O blessed Sun! I here avow
Thee for my only god, and bow
Before thy bright and holy face,
Sublime protector of my race!
Whilst thy omnipotence shall burn,
Creation's father'd eyes must turn
To thee for life in donative,
And every comfort life can give.
I ask but life for me and mine,
Whilst thy transcendent glories shine;
If farther world of bliss there be,
To Christian souls I yield it free."

Columba, hearing all reveal'd,
Before the ancient monarch kneel'd,
And cried, "O king! did I not say,
That this thy son should Albyn sway?
That he was destined—he alone,
To save his father's ancient throne?
Thou didst oppose the high decree
As far as influence lay with thee;
Now it hath happ'd in way so odd
That man could not the event forbode:
But who can thwart the arm divine?
Thanks to another God than thine!"

Colmar look'd with averted stare
On the good father kneeling there;
But deeming him below reply,
He only hemm'd, and strode him by.
Then, taking Eiden by the hand,
He led him forth along the strand,
Heaving his ample shield in air,
And wildly shaking his white hair;
And with deep sobs and laughter blent,
He wept, and shouted as he went,
"Who buckles brand on brigantine,
To follow Uiston's son and mine?
The top of Albyn's royal tree!
Who's for King Eiden and for me?"

The Scottish nobles, mad with joy,
At finding there was no alloy
Yet mingled with the metal good
Of Fingal's and the Fergus' blood—
With shouts, and songs, and one assent,
To battle rush'd incontinent.

The Norse came on: as well they might
Have tried to stay the morning light,
The torrent turn by sword or spear,
Or stop the storm in its career.

The Danish men came in the van
On Sutherland's and Ross's clan—
And dreadful was their onset shock,
On the small plain beneath the rock;
Thousands were slain; and, woe to tell!
There Colmar, King of Erin, fell;
And Gaul of Ross, as brave a lord
As ever wielded warrior's sword.
But clan on clan, like billows toiling,
Came panting on, for battle boiling,
And swept the Danish host before,
Like wreck upon the ocean shore,
Which every wave drives on and on—
So roll'd the strife tow'rds Beregon.

To tell of all the deeds of might
That there were done from morn to night,
Would steep my virgin patroness
To the fair bosom in distress:
And to relate the deeds of doom
Wrought by the royal young bridegroom,
Would class my song 'mid fabulous lore,
A folly I indulge no more.
Whene'er a breach was made in flank
Or rear of Albyn's battle rank,
There was MacUiston to supply
The breach, and quell the enemy:
Alas! he struck a foe too late
When brave old Colmar met his fate.
But yet the sire upraised his head,
And feebly laugh'd, and bless'd the deed;
Then, bending back his rigid form,
Like shrivell'd pine beneath the storm,
He fix'd his latest visive ray
Upon the glorious God of Day;
And some weak piping sounds were heard,
As if a joy with terror jarr'd;
The parting spirit's last recess
From dust and dreary nothingness!

The battle spread from cliff to shore,
Along the fields, where late before

The Danes and Norse the battle won
That drove the Scots from Beregon:
This day that order was reversed,
The invader's closest files were pierced,
And foot by foot forced to give way;
Till, at the to-fall of the day,[1]
Their speed of foot they 'gan to try
Within the city gates to fly:
They wanted Eric in their van,
Which brave MacUiston overran.

Cold, stretch'd upon his ample shield,
King Eric's corse lay on the field;
Deserted in the flame of fight,
When Norway's files wheel'd to the right.
That and old Colmar's, side by side,
Were borne in barge across the tide,
That funeral honours might be paid,
When to Iona's isle convey'd.

The tidings of the battle won,
And mighty deeds the king had done,
And who he was, on wings of wind,
Flew o'er the ferry to Queen Hynde:
Then of her joy supreme I wot
A bride may judge, but man can not.

Meantime, as deep the darkness grew,
Eiden march'd over Drimna-huah,
And down upon Bomean Moor
Descending at the midnight hour,
He found the enemy's camp at rest,
Without a guard to east or west;
Nought there remain'd in shape of foe,
But wounded men and menials low;
For all within the city gate
Had fled, on learning the defeat;
And many less intent on prey,
Unto the fleet had stolen away.
Spoil was there none, save armour good,
And hides, and furs, and beastly food:
And ere the dawn of morning came,
That mighty camp was all on flame;
A sight that cheer'd each Scottish glen,
But woeful one to Norwaymen!

On the return of morning light,
Full grievous was that army's plight,
Without a general of respect,
Or prince, or leader, to direct,
Save one was qualified the least—
Odin's most high and potent priest.
At board, at muster, or in field,
No warrior council Eric held;
Through life he suffer'd no cabal;
King, general, he was all and all.
But this bluff priest, in wondrous way,
Held over him perpetual sway;
While his last hest, "the gods to appease,"
Made this old fox's powers increase;

Save him, the host would list to none:
They ran to him, and him alone.

Until that time, King Eric's word
Had saved the city from the sword,
From pillage, and the thousand woes
That conquer'd city undergoes;
And he had saved the innocent
From the last throes of ravishment.
But now this foul and bloated priest
Issued forthwith the loved behest,
To take the city for a prey,
The loss and charges to defray,
By way of fair and just reprise:
But keep the maids for sacrifice.
And once that great oblation made
Unto the gods, as Eric bade,
The priest would answer with his head,
For Odin's high and heavenly aid.

The soldiers lauded with acclaim
The priest of Odin's blessed name;
And darted on the spoil away,
Like hungry tigers on their prey.

One hundred virgins, richly dress'd,
Were brought before this goodly priest;
And out of these selected he
His god's own number—three times three;
Those that remain'd by lot were shared
Amongst the soldiers of the guard.
Oh, grievous chance! sure death was bliss,
To such a hideous doom as this!
Well might they say, on such a lot,
Is there a God in heaven or not?

Unto the top of Selma's tower,
Beyond the reach of human power,
The nine were borne for sacrifice,
With songs and shouts that rent the skies,
And the poor victims of despair
Were stretch'd upon an altar there.

By this time many a weeping dame
Had left that hive of sin and shame,
And fled to Eiden's camp on high,
Still placed upon Doon-Valon-Righ:
All other comforts he disdain'd,
Compared with the advantage gain'd;
And there above his foes he hung,
Like osprey o'er the gannet's young.
But ah! the rueful news that came
Distracted every warlike scheme:
There lay the victims in their view,
Surrounded by the hideous crew;
And Selma's seven towers could then
Have guarded been by twenty men
Against a thousand. Such a scene
May Christian ne'er behold again!
The hymns of Odin that ascended
'Mid screams of death and horror blended,
Form'd such a dire discordant yell,
As sinner scarce shall hear from hell,

[1] *To-fall of day*, the close of day, eventide.

When through the far domains of night
He takes his drear reluctant flight,
By power unseen impell'd behind,
That sails him swifter than the wind,
To some unfathom'd gulf below,
Which minstrel fears, but does not know—
Of utter darkness and of dread
The very spring and fountain-head.[1]

"O Christian sire! if thee 'tis given
To influence the powers of heaven,
For woman's sake, though shunn'd by thee,
For hers who nursed thee on her knee,
Now use it; for no earthly power
Can save in this distressing hour!
Pray Him, in whom my soul believes,
Trembles before, but not conceives,
To send relief— Oh, father cry!"
King Eiden said, with streaming eye.

Columba stood amidst the men,
And sung a hymn from David's pen;
Then kneel'd upon the flinty rock,
The Almighty's succour to invoke;
But ere his God he had address'd,
Or suppliant word to him express'd,
The shouts from Selma's turrets sounding,
And tens of thousands these surrounding;
And smoke ascending to the sun,
Told that th' unholy deed was done.

The king, the saint, and warrior bands,
Upon their faces laid their hands,
That on such scene they might not look,
Nor the abhorr'd remembrance brook;
But good Columba bent his eyes
On heaven, and, with most vehement cries,
Implored his Saviour and his God
To smite with his avenging rod
Those rude and violating beasts,
Those vile polluted idolists,
Who dared to stain the murderous knife
In Christian virgins' sacred life.
And, as 'tis told in ancient rhyme,
Some words like these, in tone sublime,
He mutter'd to the Eternal's ear,
Which made the kneelers quake to hear:—

"Father of angels and of men!
Thou, whose omniscient heedful ken
Takes in the ample bounds of space,
Wherever smiles the human face,
Or seraphs sing, or angels dwell,
Or demons that in torment yell,—
Turn here in mercy from above
One glance of justice and of love;
Of love to those who look to thee,
And justice on their enemy;
And view a deed that stamps disgrace
On thy beloved human race.
Oh God! can such a deed beseem
Creatures thou diedst to redeem!

"If thou Jehovah art alone,
And Odin but a god of stone,
Pour down thy vengeance from the skies
On these polluted obsequies.
View but the deed, and ere 'tis done
In darkness thou wilt veil the sun:
His flaming orb shall cease to burn;
The moon and stars to blood shall turn,
While the broad sky aside shall fold,
And like a garment up be roll'd.

"Oh, if thou comest—as come thou wilt,
Vengeance to take on human guilt;
Then be thy wrath in terror shown,
By thunders from thy awful throne.
Descend in majesty supreme;
Thy chariot be devouring flame;
That all the elements may die
Beneath the lightning of thine eye.
The vales shall yawn, in terror rending,
The mountains quake at thy descending,
Nay, bow their hoary heads, and heave
Like skiff upon the yielding wave.

"Stretch but thy finger from the spheres
Towards these bloody worshippers,
And lo! the sinners and the spot
Shall quickly be as they were not!
As things of terror no more seen,
Nay, be as they had never been.

"Our eyes are fix'd on thee above—
Our hope in thy redeeming love:
Then, oh, in mercy to our race,
Hear in the heavens thy dwelling-place!"

While yet the Christian army kneel'd,
Ere brow was raised from rock or shield,
Heaven's golden portals were unbarr'd,
And the Almighty's voice was heard!
It came not forth like thunders loud,
When lightnings through the liquid cloud

[1] That this picture of Scandinavian worship may not be viewed as an exaggeration, I shall quote the words of the learned M. Mallet. "The appointed time for their sacrifices was always determined by another opinion, which made the northern nations regard the number THREE as sacred, and particularly dear to the gods. Thus, in every ninth month they renewed the bloody ceremony, which was to last nine days; and every day they offered up nine living victims, whether animals or human creatures. Then they chose among the captives in time of war, and the slaves in time of peace, nine persons to be sacrificed. The choice was partly regulated by the choice of the bystanders, and partly by lot. The wretches upon whom the lot fell were treated with such honours by all the assembly—they were so overwhelmed with caresses, and with promises for the future, that they sometimes congratulated themselves on their destiny. The priests afterwards opened the bodies, to read in the entrails, and especially the hearts, the will of the gods, and the good or evil fortune that was impending. The bodies were then burned, or suspended in some sacred grove near the temple. Part of the blood was sprinkled upon the people, part of it upon the grave; with the same they also bedewed the images, the altars, the benches, and walls of the temple, both within and without."—*See Introd. Hist. Den.*

Break up the dense and dismal gloom
With chafe, with clatter, and with boom;
It came with such a mighty sound,
As if the heavens, the depths profound,
And tempests at their utmost noise,
Cried all together in one voice.

Deep call'd to deep, and wave to wave;
Stone unto stone, and grave to grave:
The yawning cliffs and caverns groan'd;
The mountains totter'd as they moan'd;
All nature roar'd in one dire steven;[1]
Heaven cried to earth, and earth to heaven,
Till both the offenders and offended
Knew that the Eternal God descended.

After the voice a whirlwind blew,
Before it every fragment flew
Of movent nature, all in cumber,
And living creatures without number
Were borne aloft with whirling motion:
It lifted ships out of the ocean!
And all, without one falling shiver,
Were borne away, and lost for ever;
But there were cries of death and dread
Heard in the darkness overhead!

After the wind, with rending roll
A crash was heard from pole to pole,
As if the Almighty's hand had rent
The ample yielding firmament;
Or split with jangle and with knell
The adamantine arch of hell;
And, lo! from out the heavens there came
A sea of rolling smouldering flame,
Which o'er the sinners' heads impended,
And slowly, dreadfully descended;
While with their shouts the welkin broke,
"Great Odin comes! our god, our rock!"

Just while their horrid sacrifice
Still flamed with incense to the skies;
Just when their hearts were at the proudest,
And orisons had pealed the loudest,
The liquid sounding flame inclosed them,
And roll'd them in its furnace bosom!
That city fill'd with loathsome crime,
With all its piles of ancient time,
After the fiery column broke,
Scarce gave a crackle or a smoke,
More than a heap of chaff or tinder,
But melted to a trivial cinder!—

Scarce had the eye of trembling hind
Regained its sight—with terror blind,
His heart began to beat in time,
Or shudder'd at the heinous crime,
Ere the appalling scene was o'er!
One single moment, and no more,
All glitter'd with a glowing gleen,[2]
Then pass'd as they had never been.
Walls, towers, and sinners, in one sweep,
Were solder'd to a formless heap,
To stand, until that final day
When this fair world shall melt away,
As beacons sacred and sublime
Of judgment sent for human crime.

Adieu, dear maids of Scotia wide,
Your minstrel's solace and his pride;
The theme that all his feelings move
Of grief, of pity, and of love;
To you he bows with lowly bend;
His ancient tale is at an end.
More would he tell, but deems it best
That history's page should say the rest.

There thou may'st read, and read with gain,
Of Eiden's long and holy reign;
How Haco and his winsome Wene
Were Scandinavia's king and queen;
How much he owed her in his sway,
And loved her to his latest day.
He and his inmates to a man,
Dress'd in the garb of Highland clan
(Of Skye-men, whom they slew in fight,
When Donald Gorm was beat by night),
The maids had rescued from the pile,
And borne them to some western isle:
Thence they return'd to Albyn's coast
In wedded love, when all their host,
Save those within the ships that lay,
Had melted from the world away,
And were received with greetings kind
By Eiden and his lovely Hynde.
'Twas there that ancient league was framed,
For wisdom, peace, and justice famed
For many ages— Blest is he,
Thus hallow'd by posterity!

[1] *Steven*, uproar.

[2] *Gleen*, to shine, to glitter, *v.* A bright dazzling gleam, *s.*

THE FOREST MINSTREL.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR

Being himself a lover of music, and having been trained from early childhood among the songs and ballads of his country, the Ettrick Shepherd saw with regret the decay of the national spirit of melody that was taking place, especially in towns, and among fashionable society. Since the publication of the songs of Burns, no new collection of Scottish songs had appeared, those which assumed the title having been merely the old, reproduced with new forms and arrangements. Hence the predominance of English songs, and what the Shepherd disdainfully terms "Italian tirlie-whirlies," to the exclusion of Scottish music and Scottish minstrelsy. Alarmed at this symptom of national decay, and anxious to arrest it, he produced in 1810 his "Forest Minstrel."

The title of this poetical collection promises nothing more than a miscellaneous assemblage; and accordingly it is composed of songs, each written according to the mood of the moment, or the particular tune that was to be embodied in new verses. This was sufficient for the purpose, and all that is usually done in such a publication; but when the "Forest Minstrel" appeared, its materials were formally arranged under the four following heads: 1. Pathetic Songs; 2. Love Songs; 3. Humorous Songs; and 4. National Songs. It will at once be seen that without any such artificial arrangement, each song of itself distinctly indicates its own proper department. Another circumstance more worthy of notice is, that although the greater number, and those also of the highest merit, were exclusively the production of the Ettrick Shepherd, he was not the author of the whole, twenty-five of these songs having been contributed by Mr. T. Mouncey Cunningham, and others of his poetical friends, whose names are not mentioned. Among these anonymous contributions is the tender, simple, and beautiful song of "Lucy's Flittin'," of the authorship of which any poet might well be proud. In his preface to the original edition of the "Forest Minstrel," Hogg apologizes for the supplementary songs, by the variety of style and manner which they introduced into a selection that might otherwise have become monotonous. But this qualification of variety being no longer needed, these anonymous contributions have been omitted, and nothing of the "Forest Minstrel" retained except Hogg's own songs arranged in their original order. Indeed, without such an omission, the present publication could scarcely have been considered a complete and perfect edition of the Poetical Works of the Ettrick Shepherd.

In another important quality of a work like the "Forest Minstrel," our poet was sufficiently careful. Mere variety was not the chief requisites. He remembered that song-writing is a particular art by itself. A song must be something more than a short poem, or a composition of short lines. It must be naturally and completely adapted to music, or it is a song no longer, be its poetical merits what they may. Of this, the pride of poetry is too often forgetful: it will not vouchsafe to acknowledge that in such a case music is the wedded wife, and not the slave or attendant of "immortal verse;" and hence, many a beautiful ditty is sent loose into the world, as if it could find its appropriate tune at pleasure. Of all this, the Shepherd, as well as Burns himself, was aware, and he was careful to suit the note to the word, and the word to the note, as well as the spirit and sentiment to the strain that gave them utterance. On this account he was one of our best national song-writers, as well as one of our best poets. In the "Forest Minstrel," therefore, the reader will find that each production is a portion of veritable minstrelsy; that instead of being merely read or recited, it can also be sung with or without an instrumental accompaniment. The airs to which they were originally set were distinctly indicated, except in a very few cases, where the name of the song and tune are identical, or where the choice of a suitable air was left to the discretion of the singer.

Of the want of variety in the songs of this collection no complaint can be made; they present both in subject and style a charm for every class, whether of readers or melodists, and for every change of mood from the grave to the gay, from the recluse and sentimental, to the enterprising and patriotic. The estimation in which they were held was attested by the popular choice, which incorporated the best of them into our national melodies; and this choice, after the lapse of half a century has been confirmed by the suffrage of the present generation, notwithstanding its abundance of songs in every form and language. Ostensibly a humble and trivial, yet actually a most difficult aim, the "Forest Minstrel" is a successful attempt to permeate the manners and feelings of a nation with songs for every-day life—that attempt, which has been reckoned more influential than legislation itself in the promotion of private, social, and public worth, and which therefore may be justly considered as the highest and best achievement of poetry.

THE FOREST MINSTREL.

CLASS FIRST—PATHETIC SONGS.

The Soldier's Widow.

TUNE—"*Gilderoy.*"

An' art thou fled, my bonny boy,
An' left me here alane?
Wha now will love or care for me,
When thou art dead an' gane?
Thy father fell in freedom's cause,
With gallant Moore in Spain:
Now thou art gane, my bonny boy,
An' left me here alane!

I hop'd when thou wert grown a man
To trace his looks in thine,
An' saw, wi' joy, thy sparkling eye
Wi' kindling vigour shine.
I thought, when I was fail'd, I might
Wi' you an' yours remain;
But thou art fled, my bonny boy,
An' left me here alane!

Now clos'd an' set that sparkling eye!
Thy breast is cauld as clay!
An' a' my hope, an' a' my joy,
Wi' thee are reft away.
Ah! fain wad I that comely clay
Reanimate again!
But thou art fled, my bonny boy,
An' left me here alane!

The flower, now fading on the lee,
Shall fresher rise to view;
The leaf, just fallen from the tree,
The year will soon renew:
But lang may I weep o'er thy grave,
Ere you revive again!
For thou art fled, my bonny boy,
An' left me here alane!

The Flower.

Oh, softly blow, thou biting blast,
O'er Yarrow's lonely dale;
And spare yon bonny tender bud,
Exposed to every gale.

Long has she hung her drooping head,
Despairing to survive,
But transient sunbeams through the cloud
Still kept my flower alive.

One sweetly scented summer eve,
To yonder bower I strayed,
While little birds from every bough,
Their music wild conveyed:

The sunbeam leaned across the shower;
The rainbow girt the sky;
'Twas then I saw this lovely flower,
And wonder filled mine eye.

Her cheek was then the ruddy dawn,
Stolen from the rising sun;
The whitest feather from the swan
On her fair breast was dun.

Her mould of modest dignity,
Was form'd the heart to win;
The dew-drop glistening in her eye
Showed all was pure within.

But frost on cold misfortune borne,
Hath crush'd her in the clay;
And ruthless fate hath rudely torn
Each kindred branch away.

That wounded stem will never close,
But bleeding still remain:
Relentless winds, how can ye blow,
And nip my flower again?

The Moon was A-waning.

The moon was a-waning,
The tempest was over,
Fair was the maiden,
And fond was the lover;
But the snow was so deep
That his heart it grew weary,
And he sunk down to sleep
In the moorland so dreary.

Soft was the bed
She had made for her lover;
White were the sheets,
And embroidered the cover.

But his sheets are more white,
And his canopy grander,
And sounder he sleeps
Where the hill-foxes wander.

Alas, pretty maiden,
What sorrows attend you!
I see you sit shivering,
With lights at your window:
But long may you wait
Ere your arms shall inclose him,
For still, still he lies,
With a wreath on his bosom.

How painful the task
The sad tidings to tell you!—
An orphan you were
Ere this misery befell you.
And far in yon wild,
Where the dead tapers hover,
So cold, cold and wan,
Lies the corse of your lover.

Mary at her Lover's Grave.

AIR—"*Banks of the Dee.*"

How swift flew the time, when I stray'd with my Jamie
On flower-fringed valleys by Yarrow's fair stream!
But all I held precious is now taken from me:
Sure every excess of delight is a dream!
Of fate I had never complained as unkindly,
Had it to a bed or a prison confined me,
Reproach, shame, and ruin, before and behind me,
Had Jamie been by me in every extreme.

But there, where my heart I had treasur'd for ever,
Where all my affections on earth were bestow'd,
With one fatal stroke to destroy; and to sever
Two bosoms with purest affection that glow'd!
Now dim is the eye that beam'd beauty and splendour,
And cold is the heart, that was constant and tender;
The sweet cherry lips to the worm must surrender,
With wisdom and truth that delightfully flow'd.

Hence, comfort and pleasure! I cannot endure ye;
Here, on this new grave, will I bid you adieu:
My reason is bleeding, and here will I bury
That mirror, where clearly my misery I view.
O thou who the days of all mankind hast measur'd,
A fate with my Jamie I'll cheerfully hazard!
Then drive me distracted to roam in the desert,
Or bear me to him, that our joys may renew.

Else, even in death my fond arms shall inclose him,
And my dust mix with his as we moulder away:
For here, with my hands, will I dig to his bosom,
Where closely I'll cling till the dawn of the day.
When the moon and the stars with a sob shall expire,
And the sun burst away like a flash of pale fire;
Then higher and higher we'll jointly aspire
To friendship that never shall end nor decay.

Bonnie Dundee.

O will you gang down to the bush i' the meadow,
Your daddy an' mammy wi' me winna dread you;
An' by the fair hand through the flowers I will lead you,
An' sing you *The bonnets o' bonnie Dundee!*
Wi' heart an' wi' hand, my dear lad, I'll gang wi' thee,
My daddy an' mammy think nought to belie thee;
I ken ye'll do naething but kiss me an' lead me,
An' sing me *The bonnets o' bonnie Dundee.*

Oh, why fled thy angel, poor lovely Macmillan,
An' left thee to listen to counsel sae killin'?
Oh, where were the feelings o' that cruel villain,
Who rifled that blossom, an' left it to die?
How pale is that cheek that was rosy an' red aye?
To see that sunk e'e wad gar ony heart bleed aye?
Oh, wae to the wild willow-bush i' the meadow!
Oh dule to the bonnets o' bonnie Dundee!

My Peggy an' I.

TUNE—"*Paddy Whack.*"

I hae a wee wifie, an' I am her man,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
We waggle through life as weel as we can,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?
We hae a wee lassie will keep up our line,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
I'm sure she is hers, an' I think she is mine,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?

We aftentimes dandle her up on our knee,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
In ilka bit smile her dear mother I see,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?
Oh lang may she live to our honour an' joy,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
An' nae wicked fellow our darling decoy,
For wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?

Though Peggy an' I hae little o' gear,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
We're healthy, an' handy, an' never need fear,
For wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?
We sleep a' the night, an' we ply a' the day,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I:
Baith vices an' follies lie out o' our way,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?

Contented we are in the highest degree,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
An' gratefu' to Him wha contentment can gie,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?

Through life we will love, an' through life we will pray,
My Peggy an' I, my Peggy an' I;
Then, sidie for sidie, we'll sleep i' the clay,
An' wha's sae happy as Peggy an' I?

Cauld is the Blast.

TUNE—"*Lord Elcho's Delight.*"

Cauld is the blast on the braes of Strahonan,
The top of Ben-Wevis is driftin' wi' snaw;
The child i' my bosom is shiverin' an' moanin';
Oh! pity a wretch that has naething ava.
My feet they are bare, and my cleathin' is duddy,
Yes, look, gentle traveller—anee I was gay;
I hae twa little babies, baith healthy and ruddy,
But want will waste them and their mother away.

We late were as blythe as the bird on the Beauly,
When the woodland is green, an' the flower on the lee;
But now he's ta'en frae us for aye, wha was truly
A father to them and a husband to me.
My Duncan supplied me, though far away lyin'
Wi' heroes, the glory and pride of our isle;
But orders obeyin' and dangers defyin'
He fell wi' Macleod on the banks of the Nile.

Pale, pale grew the traveller's visage so manly,
An' down his grave cheek the big rollin' tear ran;
"I am not alone in the loss has befa'n me![1]
Oh wae to ambition the misery of man!
But go to my hall; to the poor an' the needy
My table is furnish'd, an' open my door;
An' there I will cherish, an' there I will feed thee,
And often together our loss we'll deplore."

The Gloamin'.

AIR—"*Mary weep nae mair for me.*"

The gloamin' frae the welkin high
Had chased the bonny gouden gleam;
The curtain'd east, in crimson die,
Lay mirror'd on the tinted stream;
The wild-rose, blushing on the brier,
Was set wi' draps o' pearly dew,
As full and clear the bursting tear
That row'd in Ellen's een o' blue.

She saw the dear, the little cot,
Where fifteen years flew swiftly by,
An' sair she wail'd the hapless lot
That forced her frae that hame to fly.

Though blythe an' mild the e'ening smiled,
Her heart was rent wi' anguish keen;
The mavis ceased his music wild,
And wonder'd what her plaint could mean.

A fringe was round the orient drawn,
A mourning veil it seem'd to be;
The star o' love look'd pale and wan,
As if the tear were in her e'e.
The dowie dell, the greenwood tree,
With all their inmates, seem'd to mourn;
Sweet Ellen's tears they doughtna see,
Departing never to return.

Alas! her grief could not be spoke,
There were no words to give it name;
Her aged parents' hearts were broke,
Her brow imbued with burning shame.
That hame could she ne'er enter mair,
Ilk honour'd face in tears to see,
Where she so oft had join'd the prayer
Pour'd frae the heart so fervently.

Ah, no! the die was foully cast,
Her fondest earthly hope was gone:
Her soul had brooded o'er the past,
Till pale despair remain'd alone.
Her heart abused, her love misused,
Her parents drooping to the tomb,
Weeping, she fled to desert bed,
To perish in its ample dome.

Lord Eglintoun's Auld Man.

The auld guidman came hame at night
Sair wearied wi' the way;
His looks were like an evening bright,
His hair was siller gray.
He spak o' days lang past an' gane,
When life beat high in every vein;
When he was foremost on the plain
On every blithesome day.

"Then blithely blushed the morning dawn,
An' gay the gloaming fell;
For sweet content led aye the van,
An' sooth'd the passions well:
Till wounded by a gilded dart,
When Jeanie's een subdued my heart,
I cherished aye the pleasing smart—
Mair sweet than I can tell.

"We had our griefs, we had our joys,
In life's uneasy way;
We nourished virtuous girls an' boys,
That now are far away;
An' she, my best, my dearest part,
The sharer o' ilk joy an' smart,
Each wish an' weakness o' my heart,
Lies mouldering in the clay.

[1] The traveller was Macleod of Geanies, father to the late brave Captain Macleod, who fell amongst his countrymen in Egypt.

"The life o' man's a winter day;
Look back, 'tis gone as soon;
But yet his pleasures halve the way,
An' fly before 'tis noon:
But conscious virtue still maintains
The honest heart through toils an' pains;
An' hope o' better days remains,
An' hauds the heart aboon."

The Guardian Angel.

The dawning was mild, and the hamlet was wild,
For it stood by an untrodden shore of the main,
When Duncan was rais'd from his slumber, amaz'd
By a voice at his door, that did shortly complain—
"Rise, Duncan, I perish!" his bosom was fir'd
With feelings no language or pen can convey:
'Twas a voice he had heard, and with rapture admir'd,
Ere fatal Culloden had forced him away.

He flew to the rock that o'ershadow'd his cot,
And wistfully look'd where his vision could reach;
He shouted——but only the echoes about
Him answer'd, and billows that rush'd on the beach.
For the winds were at rest, but the ocean, opprest,
Still heav'd like an earthquake, and broke on the shore;
The mist settled high on the mountains of Skye,
And the wild howling storm ruffled nature no more.

He search'd every glen, every creek, every isle,
Although every sense was with reason at strife;
When the sun blinked red o'er the hills of Argyle,
He found his Matilda, his lady, his wife!
Resign'd to her fate, on a little green plat,
Where a cliff intercepted the wanderer's way,
On her bosom so fair, and her fine yellow-hair,
The frost of the morning lay crisped and gray.

He wept like a child, while beside her he kneel'd,
And cried, "O, kind Father, look down on my woe!
O, spare my sweet wife, and the whole of my life
My heart, for the gift, shall with gratitude glow!"
By care and attention she slowly recovers,
And found herself lock'd in her husband's embrace.
But, reader, if ever thou hast been a lover,
Thy heart will outgo me, and furnish this space.

She said she had heard of his quiet retreat
And had come from the vale ere the tempest had lower'd;
That the snow and the sleet had benumb'd her weak feet,
And with hunger and cold she was quite overpower'd.
For her way she had lost, and the torrents she cross'd
Had often nigh borne her away to the main;
But the night coming on, she had laid herself down,
And pray'd to her Maker, nor pray'd she in vain.

"But did not you call at my cottage so early,
When morning's gray streamers scarce crested the fell?
A voice then did name me, and waken'd me fairly,
And bade me arise, and the voice I knew well."
"Than where I was found I was never more nigh thee:
I sunk, overcome by toil, famine, and grief;
Some pitying angel, then hovering by me,
Has taken my voice to afford me relief."

Then down they both bow'd, and most solemnly vow'd
To their great Benefactor his goodness to mind,
Both evening and morning unto them returning;
And well they perform'd the engagement we find.
They both now are cold; but the tale they have told
To many, while gratitude's tears fell in store;
And whenever I pass by the bonny Glenasby,
I mind the adventure on Morven's lone shore.

CLASS SECOND—LOVE SONGS.

My Blythe and Bonnie Lassie.

TUNE—"*Neil Gow's farewell to Whisky.*"

How sair my heart nae man shall ken
When I took leave o' yonder glen,
Her faithful dames, her honest men,
Her streams sae pure an' glassy, O:
Her woods that skirt the verdant vale,
Her balmy breeze sae brisk an' hale,
Her flower of every flower the wale,
My blythe an' bonnie lassie, O!

The night was short, the day was lang,
An' aye we sat the birks amang,
Till o'er my head the blackbird sang,
"Gae part wi' that dear lassie, O."
When on Lamgaro's top sae green
The rising sun-beam red was seen,
Wi' aching heart I left my Jean,
My blythe an' bonnie lassie, O.

Her form is gracefu' as the pine;
Her smile the sunshine after rain;
Her nature cheerfu', frank, an' kind,
An' neither proud nor saucy, O.
The ripest cherry on the tree
Was ne'er sae pure or meek to see,
Nor half sae sweet its juice to me,
As a kiss o' my dear lassie, O.

Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
Yon glen shall aye be dear to me;
Her banks an' howms sae fair to see;
Her braes sae green an' grassy, O:

For there my hopes are centred a';
An' there my heart was stown awa;
An' there my Jeanie first I saw,
My blythe an' bonnie lassie, O!

Bonnie Mary.

Where Yarrow rows amang the rocks,
An' wheels an' boils in mony a linn,
A brisk young shepherd fed his flocks,
Unused to wranglement or din.
But love its silken net had thrown
Around his breast, so brisk an' airy;
An' his blue eyes wi' moisture shone.
As thus he sung of bonnie Mary.

"O Mary, thou'rt sae mild and sweet,
My very being clings about thee;
This heart would rather cease to beat,
Than beat a lonely thing without thee.
I see thee in the evening beam—
A radiant, glorious apparition;
I see thee in the midnight dream,
By the dim light of heavenly vision.

"When over Benger's haughty head
The morning breaks in streaks sae bonnie,
I climb the mountain's velvet side,
For quiet rest I getna ony.
How dear the lair on yon hill cheek,
Where mony a weary hour I tarry!
For there I see the twisting reek
Rise frae the cot where dwells my Mary.

"When Phœbus keeks out-o'er the muir,
His gowden locks a' streaming gaily;
When morn has breathed her fragrance pure,
An' life an' joy ring through the valley;
I drive my flocks to yonder brook,
The feeble in my arms I carry;
Then every lammie's harmless look
Brings to my mind my bonnie Mary.

"Oft has the lark sung o'er my head,
An' shook the dew-drops frae his wing;
Oft hae my flocks forgot to feed,
An' round their shepherd form'd a ring.
Their looks condole the lee-lang day,
While mine are fix'd and never vary,
Aye turning down the westlin' brae,
Where dwells my loved, my bonnie Mary.

"When gloaming, creeping west the lift,
Wraps in deep shadow dell and dingle,
An' lads an' lasses mak a shift
To raise some fun around the ingle;
Regardless o' the wind or rain
With cautious step and prospect wary,
I often trace the lonely glen
To steal a sight o' bonnie Mary.

"When midnight draws her curtain deep,
An' lays the breeze amang the bushes;
An' Yarrow in her sounding sweep,
By rock and ruin raves and rushes;
Though sunk in deep and quiet sleep,
My fancy wings her flight so airy,
To where sweet guardian spirits keep
Their watch around the couch of Mary.

"The exile may forget his home,
Where blooming youth to manhood grew;
The bee forget the honey-comb,
Nor with the spring his toil renew:
The sun may lose his light and heat,
The planets in their rounds miscarry;
But my fond heart shall cease to beat,
When I forget my bonnie Mary."

The Braes of Bushby.

Ae glenting cheerfu' simmer morn,
As I cam o'er the rigs o' Lorn,
I heard a lassie all forlorn
Lamenting for her Johnnie, O.
Her wild notes poured the air alang;
The Highland rocks an' woodlands rang,
An' aye the o'erword o' her sang
Was "Bushby braes are bonnie, O.

"On Bushby braes where blossoms blow,
Where bloom the brier an' sulky sloe,
There first I met my only joe,
My dear, my faithfu' Johnnie, O.
The grove was dark, sae dark an' sweet,
Where first my lad an' I did meet;
The roses blushed around our feet;
Then Bushby braes were bonnie, O.

"Departed joys, how soft, how dear,
That frae my e'e still wring the tear!
Yet still the hope my heart shall cheer
Again to meet my Johnnie, O.
The primrose saw, an' blue hare-bell,
But nane o' them our love can tell;
The thrilling joy I felt too well
When Bushby braes were bonnie, O.

"My lad is to the Baltic gane,
To fight the proud an' doubtfu' Dane:
For our success my heart is fain;
But 'tis maistly for my Johnnie, O.
Then, Cupid, smooth the German Sea,
An' bear him back to Lorn an' me!
An' a' my life I'll sing wi' glee,
The Bushby braes are bonnie, O."

Blythe an' Cheerie.

AIR—"*Blythe, blythe an' merry was she.*"

On Ettrick clear there grows a brier,
An' mony a bonnie blooming shaw;

But Peggie's grown the fairest flower
The braes o' Ettrick ever saw.
Her cheek is like the woodland rose;
Her e'e the violet set wi' dew;
The lily's fair without compare,
Yet in her bosom tines its hue.

Had I as muckle gowd an' gear
As I could lift unto my knee,
Nae ither lass but Peggie dear
Should ever be a bride to me.
Oh she's blithe, an' oh she's cheerie,
Oh she's bonnie, frank, an' free!
The sternies bright, nae dewy night,
Could ever beam like Peggie's e'e.

Had I her hame at my wee house,
That stands aneath yon mountain high,
To help me wi' the kye an' ewes,
An' in my arms at e'ening lie;
Oh sae blithe, an' oh sae cheerie,
Oh sae happy we wad be!
The lammie to the ewe is dear,
But Peggie's dearer far to me.

But I may sigh and stand abeigh,
An' greet till I tine baith my een;
Though Peggie's smile my heart beguiles,
She disna mind my love a preen.
Oh I'm sad, an' oh I'm sorry!
Sad an' sorry may I be;
I may be sick an' very sick,
But I'll be desperate sweer to dee.

To Miss Jane S——f.

AIR—"*Arniston House.*"

I wasna sae soon to my bed yestreen;
What ail'd me I never could close an e'e?
Was't Chalmers's sherry that thrill'd ilka vein,
Or glamour yon gipsy has thrown upon me?
I'm certain twa een as bright I hae seen;
An' every perfection in every degree;
Can naebody sing like Jeanie yestreen,
That sleep's sae completely departed frae me?

It isna her een, where modesty beams,
Where sense an' guid nature apparent we see;
'Tis her sweet cherry lips, and her delicate form,
Have left an impression where it shouldna be.
No, that's not the thing: 'tis an elegant ease
Attending ilk action, though ever sae wee;
An' her sweet heavenly voice, sae to melody tuned,
It will ring in my lugs till the day that I dee.

It isna her een sae bonnie and blue,
Nor nae single beauty astonishes me;
But the hale o' the lassie arises to view,
As a model what womankind really may be.
Your love in a present I wadna' receive,
It wad mar sic a pure an' agreeable dream;
But only, if you think it prudent to give,
A shepherd, dear Jeanie, intreats your esteem.

The Bonnie Lass of Deloraine.

AIR—"*Maid of Isla.*"

Still must my pipe lie idle by,
And worldly cares my mind annoy!
Again its softest notes I'll try,
So dear a theme can never cloy.
Last time my mountain harp I strung,
'Twas she inspired the simple strain—
That lovely flower so sweet and young,
The bonnie lass of Deloraine.

How blest the breeze's balmy sighs
Around her ruddy lips that blow:
The flower that in her bosom dies;
Or grass that bends beneath her toe.
Her cheek's endowed with powers at will
The rose's richest shade to drain;
Her eyes, what soft enchantments fill!
The bonnie lass of Deloraine.

Let Athol boast her birchen bowers,
And Lomond of her isles so green;
And Windermere her woodland shores;
Our Ettrick boasts a sweeter scene:
For there the evening twilight swells
With many a wild and melting strain;
And there the pride of beauty dwells,
The bonnie lass of Deloraine.

If Heaven shall keep her aye as good
And bonnie as she wont to be,
The world may into Ettrick crowd,
And nature's first perfection see.
Glencoe has drawn the wanderer's eye,
And Staffa in the western main;
These natural wonders ne'er can vie
Wi' the bonnie lass of Deloraine.

May health still cheer her beauteous face,
And round her brow may honour twine;
And Heaven preserve that breast in peace,
Where meekness, love, and duty join!
But all her joys shall cheer my heart,
And all her griefs shall give me pain;
For never from my soul shall part
The bonnie lass of Deloraine.

I hae lost my Jeanie, O.

AIR—"*Lady Cunningham's Delight.*"

Oh, I hae seen when fields were green,
An' birds sae blithe an' cheerie, O,

How swift the day would pass away
When I was wi' my dearie, O.
My heart's now sair, my elbows bare,
My pouch without a guinea, O;
I'll never taste o' pleasure mair,
Since I hae lost my Jeanie, O.

O fortune, thou hast used me ill,
Far waur than my deserving, O;
Thrice o'er the crown thou'st knocked me down,
An' left me haufflins starving, O:
Thy roughest blast has blawn the last,
My lass has used me meanly, O;
Thy keenest dart has pierced my heart,
An' ta'en frae me my Jeanie, O.

I'll nae mair strive, while I'm alive,
For aught but missing slavery, O;
This world's a stage, a pilgrimage,
A mass o' guilt an' knavery, O:
If fickle fame but save my name,
An' frae oblivion screen me, O:
Then farewell fortune, farewell love,
An' farewell, bonnie Jeanie, O!

Here, fix'd by choice.

Here, fix'd by choice, too long I staid
Beside the lovely Flora;
Too fond to see the charming maid,
The cause of all my sorrow.
The rising sun each morning saw
My passion fast augmenting,
Till she with Campbell cross'd the main,
And left her love lamenting.

No curses on her head I'll crave;
My blessing still attend her;
Whene'er I offer up my vows,
My dear I'll aye remember.
Though mountains rise, and rivers roll,
And oceans rage between us,
If death me spare, I'll search for her
Through all the Carolinas.

Nor absence, time, nor balmy rest,
Nor grief, nor tears, can ease me;
I feel the time approaching fast
When a clay-cold bed will please me.
Then rest my head upon yon hill,
Where blows the blooming heather:
There first at Flora's feet I fell;
There oft we sat together.

How happy would my charmer seem!
How sorry when I left her!
I would not then have chang'd my seat
With him that sway'd the sceptre.
My prospect glow'd with fairest flowers,
From bliss no bounds to bar me;
Now dismal shades and dreary shores
With rueful murmurs scare me.

There was a time no more I'll see,
I spent in mirth and ranging;
There was a time when I was gay,
But times are always changing.
The times shall change, and moons shall wane,
Yet I in love still languish;
My tender heart must break in twain,
Since nought can ease mine anguish.

I'm gane a' wrang, Jamie.

TUNE—"*Up an' waur them a', Willie.*"

"O what maks you sae dowie, lassie?
What maks you sae cheerless?
For wit, an' fun, an' harmless glee,
My Peggy aye was peerless.
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye've lost a frien', or catch'd the spleen,
Or for some lad thought lang, Peggy."

"Yes, I hae catch'd a weary spleen
Has banish'd a' my mirth, Jamie;
An' I hae lost the dearest frien'
That e'er I ken'd on earth, Jamie.
I'm gane a' wrang, Jamie,
I'm gane a' wrang, Jamie,
For I've lien in an unco bed,
Ayont an' unco man, Jamie."

"Ah, wae's my heart for what ye've done!
Ye canna hide it lang, Peggy:
How could ye use your love sae ill?
Ye have done a' wrang, Peggy.
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye promis'd aft to marry me,
An' aye ere it was lang, Peggy.

"I'm unco wae to tak my leave;
But that's the thing maun be, Peggy:
I'll never like a lass sae weel,
Sin' I hae done wi' thee, Peggy.
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye're gane a' wrang, Peggy,
Ye promis'd aft to marry me,
An' aye ere it was lang, Peggy."

"I weel deserve my hapless lot,
Ye war sae kind an' true, Jamie;
My broken heart will ne'er forget
How I've misused you, Jamie.
I'm gane a' wrang, Jamie,
I'm gane a' wrang, Jamie;
For I've lien in an unco bed,
Ayont an unco man, Jamie."

"My dear, I ken ye've done amiss;
But blame was far frae thee, Peggy:
I'll tell you what will gar you blush,—
The unco man was me, Peggy.

We've done a' wrang, Peggy,
We've done a' wrang, Peggy;
We'll do the best that now remains,
An' wed ere it be lang, Peggy."

The Hay-makers.

TUNE—"*Coming through the Rye.*"

"My lassie, how I'm charm'd wi' you
'Tis needless now to tell;
But a' the flowers the meadow through,
Ye're sweetest aye yoursel':
I canna sleep a wink by night,
Nor think a thought by day:
Your image smiles afore my sight
Whate'er I do or say."

"Fye, Jamie! dinna act the part
Ye'll ever blush to own;
Or try to wile my youthfu' heart
Frae reason's sober throne:
Sic visions I can ne'er approve,
Nor ony wakin' dream;
Than trust sic fiery furious love,
I'd rather hae esteem."

"My bonny lassie, come away,
I canna bide your frown;
Wi' ilka flower sae fresh an' gay,
I'll deck your bosom round;
I'll pu' the gowan off the glen,
The lily off the lea;
The rose and hawthorn bud I'll twine
To make a bob for thee."

"Aye, Jamie, ye wad steal my heart,
An' a' my peace frae me;
An' fix my feet within the net,
Ere I my error see.
I trow ye'll wale the flowery race
My bosom to adorn:
An' ye confess ye're gaun to place
Within my breast a thorn."

"How can my lassie be sae tart,
An' vex me a' the day?
Ye ken I lo'e wi' a' my heart,
What wad ye hae me say?
Ilk anxious wish an' little care
I'll in thy breast confide,
An' a' your joys and sorrows share
If ye'll become my bride."

"Then tak my hand, ye hae my heart;
There's nane I like sae weel;
An' Heaven grant I act my part
To ane sae true an' leal.
This bonnie day amang the hay,
I'll mind till death us twine;
An' often bless the happy day
That made my laddie mine."

The Bogles.

TUNE—"*Logie o' Buchan.*"

My bonnie Eliza is fled frae the town,
An' left her poor Jamie her loss to bemoan;
To me 'tis a sad and lamentable day;
For the bogles have chas'd my Eliza away.
The Lowlands may weep, and the Highlands may smile,
In welcome to her that's the flower of our isle:
It's all for thy honour, ambitious Tay,
That the bogles have chas'd my Eliza away.

There's ae bitter thought has gi'en me muckle pain,
I fear I will never behold her again;
I canna get quit o't, by night nor by day,
Since the bogles have chas'd my Eliza away.
Oh, sweet may the breeze be her mountains between!
And sweet be her walks through her woodlands so green!
And sweet be the murmurs of fair winding Tay,
Since the bogles have chased my Eliza away!

I love her; I own it; I'll own it again;
If I had two friends on the earth, she was ane;
And now I can neither be cheerfu' nor gay,
Since the bogles have chas'd my Eliza away.
May Heaven in kindness long shelter my flower,
So admir'd by the rich, and belov'd by the poor!
Whose blessing will cheer her sweet bosom for aye,
Nor fairy nor bogle will chase it away.

Bonnie Jean.

TUNE—"*Prince William Henry's Delight.*"

Sing on, sing on, my bonnie bird,
The sang ye sang yestreen, O,
When here, aneath the hawthorn wild,
I met my bonnie Jean, O.
My blude ran prinklin' through my veins,
My hair began to steer, O;
My heart play'd deep against my breast,
As I beheld my dear, O.

O weels me on my happy lot!
O weels me on my dearie!
O weels me on the charmin' spot,
Where a' combin'd to cheer me!
The mavis liltit on the bush,
The lavrock on the green, O:
The lily bloom'd, the daisy blush'd,
But a' was nought to Jean, O.

Sing on, sing on, my bonnie thrush,
Be neither flee'd nor eerie;
I'll wad your love sits in the bush,
That gars ye sing sae cheerie:
She may be kind, she may be sweet,
She may be neat an' clean, O;
But oh she's but a drysome mate,
Compared wi' bonnie Jean, O.

If love would open a' her stores,
An' a' her bloomin' treasures,
An' bid me rise, and turn, and choice,
An' taste her chiefest pleasures;
My choice wad be the rosy cheek,
The modest beaming eye, O;
The yellow hair, the bosom fair,
The lips o' coral dye, O.

A bramble shade around her head,
A burine poplin' by, O;
Our bed the swaird, our sheet the plaid,
Our canopy the sky, O.
An' here's the burn, an' there's the bush
Around the flowery green, O;
An' this the plaid, an' sure the lass
Wad be my bonnie Jean, O.

Hear me, thou bonnie modest moon!
Ye sternies twinklin' high, O!
An' a' ye gentle powers aboon,
That roam athwart the sky, O!
Ye see me gratefu' for the past,
Ye saw me blest yestreen, O;
An' ever till I breathe my last
Ye'll see me true to Jean, O.

Bonnie Leezy.

TUNE—"*O'er the Muir amang the Heather.*"

Though I've enjoyed my youth in health,
An' liv'd a life both free an' easy;
Yet real delight I never felt
Until I saw my bonnie Leezy.
I've seen the Athol birk sae fair,
The mountain pine, an' simple daisy;
But nought I've seen can c'er compare
Wi' the modest gracefu' form o' Leezy.

I've seen the hare trip o'er the dale,
The lamb upon the lea sae gaily;
But when young Leezy trips the vale,
For lively ease, she dings them fairly.
Her een, the dew-draps o' the morn!
Hae gi'en my heart an unco heezy:
It canna be that pride or scorn
Can lodge within the breast o' Leezy.

I winna greet, I winna dee,
Though love has made me something reezy:
But mirth shall never gang wi' me
If aught befa' my bonnie Leezy.
When her and I to rest are gane,
May shepherds strew our graves wi' daisy!
And when o'er us they make their maen,
Aye join my name wi' bonnie Leezy!

How well may I.

TUNE—"*Jacky Latin.*"

Now well may I the haunts defy,
Where love unlicens'd reign'd, O,
Where sense is pall'd an' conscience gall'd,
And nature's laws profaned, O:
In yonder wood, above the flood,
Conceal'd frae ilka eye, O,
Forby the bat, an' beaming wain,
That slowly wheels on high, O.

Where blooms the brier, gie me my dear
In innocence to woo, O;
An' ilka care on earth I'll leave,
This blessing to pursue, O.
Though troubles rise, and wars increase,
And discontents prevail, O,
We'll laugh and sing, and love our king,
Till strength and vigour fail, O.

The Sheep Shearing.

TUNE—"*Bung your Eye i' the Morning.*"

The morning was fair, and the firmament sheen;
The valley was fresh, and the mountain was green,
When bonnie young Jean, of our maidens the queen,
Went over the dale to the shearing.
Her form was so fair, it was rather divine;
The rose-leaf and lily her features entwine;
Her lip was the clover-flower moistened with wine;
Her manner was sweet and endearing.

Her voice was the music, so tuneful and true;
Her hair was the sun-beam; her eye was the dew,
The mirror where love did his image review,
And smile at the shadow so pleasing.
The knight, who was there at the shearing the ewes,
Says, "Farmer, your daughter's a beautiful rose:"
Then up to Miss Jeanie he instantly goes,
And kiss'd her and aye would be teasing.

He led her, and toy'd with her all the long day,
And gave her a ring set with jewels so gay:
"Oh! meet me, my dear," he would pressingly say,
"This night in the bower by the river."
"I'll ask at my father," young Jeanie replies;
"I fain would be with you; but if he denies"—
"Ah! pray do not tell him," said he, with surprise,
"And I'll love you, my Jeanie, for ever."

"But what, my dear sir, are you wanting with me?
I'll never do aught but my father may see;
He'll never refuse to intrust me with thee
From evening till dawn of the morning."
She cries—"My dear father, the knight and your Jean
This night are to meet in the woodland so green,
To kiss and to prattle by mortal unseen,
From evening till dawn of the morning."

The knight was abashed, and the farmer look'd sour;
"He mocks you, my jewel, go not to the bower."
"Then, sir, I am sorry 'tis out of my power
To meet you this night by the river.

I'll always be proud of your gay company,
When my father permits I will wait upon thee."
Then light as a lamb she skipp'd over the lea,
And left the poor knight in a fever.

"I ne'er saw a creature so lovely and sly;
Confound me, if ever I saw such an eye!
But every contrivance in life I will try
To catch her alone by the river."
But all was in vain, she evaded him still,
Yet always received him with kindest good-will;
And now she's the lady of Merleton-hill,
And lovely and loving as ever.

How Foolish are Mankind.

TUNE—"*The Lone Vale.*"

How foolish are mankind to look for perfection
In any poor changling under the sun!
By nature, or habit, or want of reflection,
To vices or folly we heedlessly run.
The man who is modest and kind in his nature,
And open and cheerful in every degree;
Who feels for the woes of his own fellow-creature,
Though subject to failings, is dear unto me.

Far dearer to me is the humble ewe-gowan,
The sweet native violet, or bud of the broom,
Than fine fostered flowers in the garden a-growing,
Though sweet be their savour and bonnie their bloom.
Far dearer to me is the thrush or the linnet,
Than any fine bird from a far foreign tree;
And dearer my lad, with his plaid and blue bonnet,
Than all our rich nobles or lords that I see.

My Dear Little Jeanie.

AIR—"*Lack o' Goud.*"

"My dear little Jeanie, what maks ye sae shy
An' saucy wi' Charlie, whase horses an' kye
Gang wide on the meadow, his ewes on the lea!
An' where will you see sic a laddie as he?"
"Ah! father, if ye ken'd him as weel as I,
How ye wad despise him, his ewes an' his kye!
Whene'er we're our lane, on the meadow or hill,
Ilk word an' ilk action is tendin' to ill.

But Jamie's sae modest, that him I maun ruse;
He'll beg for a kiss, which I canna refuse:
He ne'er gies a look that a lassie needs fear,
Nor yet says a word but the warld may hear.
I ken, my dear father, ye like me sae weel,
That naething frae you I can ever conceal:
Young Charlie is handsome, and gallant to see;
But Jamie, though poorer, is dearer to me."

"My sweet little Jeanie, the pride o' my age!
Oh, how I'm delighted to hear you sae sage!
The forward, who maks the young maiden his prey,
Is often caress'd, and the good sent away.
I like ye, my Jeanie, as dear as my life;
Ye've been a kind daughter, sae will ye a wife.
Then gree wi' your Jamie when he comes again;
From this time I'll count him a son o' my ain."

CLASS THIRD—HUMOROUS SONGS.

Doctor Monroe.

AIR—"*Humours o' Glen.*"

"Dear Doctor, be clever, an' fling aff your beaver,
Come, bleed me an' blister me, dinna be slow;
I'm sick, I'm exhausted, my prospects are blasted,
An' a' driven heels o'er head, Doctor Monroe!"
"Be patient, dear fellow, you foster your fever;
Pray, what's the misfortune that troubles you so?"
"O Doctor, I'm ruin'd, I'm ruin'd for ever—
My lass has forsaken me, Doctor Monroe!

"I meant to have married, an' tasted the pleasures,
The sweets, the enjoyments from wedlock that flow;
But she's ta'en anither, an' broken my measures,
An' fairly dumfounder'd me, Doctor Monroe!
I am fool'd, I am dover'd as dead as a herring—
Good sir, you're a man of compassion, I know;
Come, bleed me to death, then, unflinching, unerring,
Or grant me some poison, dear Doctor Monroe!"

The Doctor he flang aff his big-coat an' beaver,
He took out his lance, an' he sharpen'd it so;
No judge ever look'd more decided or graver—
"I've oft done the same, sir," says Doctor Monroe,
"For gamblers, rogues, jockeys, and desperate lovers,
But I always make charge of a hundred, or so."
The patient look'd pale, and cried out in shrill quavers,
"The devil! do you say so, sir, Doctor Monroe?"

"Oh yes, sir, I'm sorry there's nothing more common;
I like it—it pays—but, ere that length I go,
A man that goes mad for the love of a woman
I sometimes can cure with a lecture, or so."
"Why, thank you, sir; there spoke the man and the friend too;
Death is the last reckoner with friend or with foe:
The lecture then, first, if you please, I'll attend to;
The other, of course, you know, Doctor Monroe."

The lecture is said—How severe, keen, an' cutting,
Of love an' of wedlock, each loss an' each woe!
The patient got up—o'er the floor he went strutting,
Smil'd, caper'd, an' shook hands with Doctor Monroe.
He dresses, an' flaunts it with Bell, Sue, and Chirsty,
But freedom an' fun chooses not to forego;
He still lives a batchelor, drinks when he's thirsty,
An' sings like a lark, an' loves Doctor Monroe!

Love's Like a Dizziness.

AIR—"*Paddy's Wedding.*"

I lately lived in quiet case,
An' never wish'd to marry, O;
But when I saw my Peggy's face,
I felt a sad quandary, O.
Though wild as ony Athol deer,
She has trepanned me fairly, O:
Her cherry cheeks an' een sae clear
Torment me late an' early, O.
O, love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness!
It winna let a poor body
Gang about his business!

To tell my feats this single week
Wad mak a daft-like diary, O;
I drave my cart out-o'er a dike,
My horses in a miry, O.
I wear my stockings white an' blue,
My love's sae fierce an' fiery, O;
I drill the land that I should plough,
An' plough the drills entirely, O.
O, love, love, love! &c.

Ae morning, by the dawn o' day,
I raise to theek the stable, O;
I cuist my coat, an' plied away
As fast as I was able, O:
I wrought that morning out an' out,
As I'd been redding fire, O;
When I had done an' look'd about,
Gude faith, it was the byre, O!
O, love, love, love! &c.

Her wily glance I'll ne'er forget;
The dear, the lovely blinkin o't,
Has pierced me through an' through the heart,
An' plagues me wi' the prinkling o't.
I tried to sing, I tried to pray,
I tried to drown't wi' drinkin' o't;
I tried wi' sport to drive't away,
But ne'er can sleep for thinkin' o't.
O, love, love, love! &c.

Were Peggie's love to hire the job,
An' save my heart frae breaking, O,
I'd put a girdle round the globe,
Or dive in Corryvrekin, O;
Or howk a grave at midnight dark
In yonder vault sae eerie, O;
Or gang an' spier for Mungo Park
Through Africa sae dreary, O.
O, love, love, love! &c.

Nae man can tell what pains I prove,
Or how severe my pliskie, O;
I swear I'm sairer drunk wi' love,
Than ever I was wi' whisky, O.
For love has raked me fore an' aft,
I scarce can lift a leggie, O:
I first grew dizzy, then gaed daft,
An' soon I'll dee for Peggy, O.
O, love, love, love!
Love is like a dizziness!
It winna let a poor body
Gang about his business!

Auld Ettrick John.

AIR—"*Rothiemurchie's Rant.*"

There dwalt a man on Ettrick side,
An honest man I wat was he;
His name was John, an' he was born
A year afore the thretty-three.
He wed a wife when he was young,
But she had dee'd, and John was wae;
He wantit lang, at length did gang
To court Nell Brunton o' the Brae.

Auld John cam daddin' down the hill,
His arm was waggin' manfullye,
He thought his shadow look'd nae ill,
As aft he keek'd aside to see;
His shoon war four punds weight a-piece,
On ilka leg a ho had he,
His doublet strang was large an' lang,
His breeks they hardly reached his knee;

His coat was thread about wi' green,
The moths had wrought it muckle harm,
The pouches were an ell atween,
The cuff was fauldit up the arm;
He wore a bonnet on his head,
The bung upon his shoulders lay,
An' by its neb ye wad hae read
That Johnnie view'd the milky way:

For Johnnie to himself he said,
As he came duntin' down the brae,
"A wooer ne'er should hing his head,
But blink the breeze an' brow the day;"
An' Johnnie said unto himsel',
"A wooer risks nae broken banes;
I'll tell the lassie sie a tale
Will gar her look twa gates at ance."

But yet, for a' his antic dress,
His cheeks wi' healthy red did glow;

His joints war knit and firm like brass,
Though siller-gray his head did grow;
An' John, although he had nae lands,
Had twa gude kye amang the knowes,
A hunder punds in honest hands,
An' sax-an-thretty doddit ewes.

An' Nelly was a sonsie lass,
Fu' ripe an' ruddy was her mou',
Her een war like twa beads o' glass,
Her brow was white like Cheviot woo:
Her cheeks war bright as heather-bells,
Her bosom like December snaw,
Her teeth war whiter nor egg-shells,
Her hair was like the hoody craw.[1]

John crackit o' his bob-tail'd ewes;
He crackit o' his good milk-kye,
His kebbucks, hams, an' cogs o' brose,
An' siller out at trust forby;
An' aye he showed his buirdly limb,
As bragging o' his feats sae rare,
An' a' the honours paid to him
At kirk, at market, or at fair.

Wi' sic-like say he wan the day,
Nell soon became his dashin' bride;

But ilka joy soon fled away
Frae Johnnie's canty ingle side;
For there was fretting late an' air,
An' something aye awanting still:
The saucy taunt an' bitter jeer—
Now, sic a life does unco ill.

An' John will be a gaishen soon;
His teeth are frae their sockets flown;
The hair's peel'd aff his head aboon;
His face is milk-an'-water grown;
His legs that firm like pillars stood,
Are now grown toom an' unco sma';
She's reaved him sair o' flesh an' bluid,
An' peace o' mind, the warst of a'.

May ilka lassie understand
In time the duties of a wife;
But youth wi' youth gae hand in hand,
Or tine the sweetest joys o' life.
Ye men whose heads are turning gray,
Wha to the grave are hastin' on,
Let reason a' your passions sway,
An' mind the fate o' Ettrick John.

Ye lasses, lightsome, blithe, an' fair,
Let pure affection win the hand;
Ne'er stoop to lead a life o' care,
Wi' doited age, for gear or land.
When ilka lad your beauty slights,
An' ilka blush is broke wi' wae,
Ye'll mind the lang an' lanesome nights
O' Nell, the lassie o' the Brae.

[1] In another edition the conclusion of the song stands thus:

"Gudewife," quo John, as he sat down,
"I'm come to court your daughter Nell;
An' if I die immediately
She shall hae a' the gowd hersel.
An' if I chance to hae a son,
I'll breed him up a braw divine;
An' I'll provide for a' the lave,
Although we should hae aught or nine."

Wi' little say he wan the day,
She soon became his bonnie bride;
But ilka joy is fled away
Frae Johnnie's cantie ingle side.
She frets, an' greets, an' visits aft,
In hopes some lad will see her hame;
But never ane will be sae daft
As tent auld Johnnie's flisky dame.

An' John will be a gaishen soon;
His teeth are frae their sockets flown;
The hair's peeled aff his head aboon;
His face is milk-an'-water grown:
His legs, that firm like pillars stood,
Are now grown toom an' unco sma';
She's reaved him sair o' flesh an' bluid,
An' peace o' mind, the warst of a'.

Let ilka lassie tak a man,
An' ilka callan tak a wife;
But youth wi' youth gae hand in hand,
Or tine the sweetest joys o' life.
Ye men whase heads are turning gray,
Wha to the grave are hasting on,
Let reason aye your passion sway,
An' mind the fate o' Ettrick John.

An' all ye lasses, plump an' fair,
Let pure affection guide your hand,
Nor stoop to lead a life o' care
Wi' withered age for gear or land.
When ilka lad your beauty slights,
An' ilka smile shall yield to wae,
Ye'll mind the lang an' lanesome nights
O' Nell, the lassie o' the Brae.

Bonnie Beety.

TUNE—"*Tow, row, row.*"

"I was a weaver, young an' free,
Sae frank an' cheery aye to meet wi',
Until wi' ane unwary e'e
I view'd the charms o' bonnie Beety.
Lack-a-day!
Far away
Will I gae,
If I lose her.

I tauld her I had got a wound
Through sark an' waistcoat frae her sweet e'e;
She said it ne'er should do't again,
An' off like lightning flew my Beety.
Luckless day!
May I say,
When my way
Led to Beety.

Ae day she cam wi' hanks o' yarn,
When wi' my wark my face was sweaty;
She said I was a crieshy thief,
An' ne'er should get a kiss o' Beety.

O ho, ho, hon!
Now I'm gone,
Love has pro'en
A weaver's ruin.

She laughs at me an' at my loom,
An' wi' the herd has made a treaty;
But wae light on his clouted shoon,
How durst he e'er attempt my Beety?
Oh how blind,
Eyes an' mind,
Womankind
Are to their profit!

But by my shuttle now I swear,
An' by my beam, if Watie meet me,
I'll cut his throat frae ear to ear—
I'll lose my life or gain my Beety.
Blood an' guts!
Jades an' sluts!
I'll lose my wits,
If I lose Beety."

Thus sang the weaver at his wark,
An' wi' pure grief was like to greet aye,
When Charlie brought a letter ben,
He thought he ken'd the hand o' Beety.
Happy day!
Did he say,
When my way
Led to Beety.

He read—"Dear sir, my wedding day
Is Friday neist, an' yon maun meet me,
To wish me joy, an' drink my health,
An' dine wi' me—your servant, Beety."
"O ho, ho, hon!
Now I'm gone,
Love has pro'en
A weaver's ruin."

He raise, sat down, an' raise again—
Ask'd Charlie if the day was sleety;
Then through his head he popp'd the lead,
An' died a fool for love o' Beety.
The web is red,
Beety's wed,
Will is dead,
An' all is over.

Ayont the Mow amang the Hay.

TUNE—"*Andrew wi' his Cutty Gun.*"

Blythely hae I screw'd my pipes,
An' blythely play'd the lee-lang day,
An' blyther been wi' bonnie Bess
Ayont the mow amang the hay.
Whan first I saw the bonnie face
O' Bessie, bloomin' in her teens,
She wil'd away this heart o' mine,
An' ca'd it fou o' corkin' preens.

"At e'en, when a' the lave gae lie,
An' grannie steeks her waukrife e'e,
Steal out when i' the winnock tap,
Ahint the ha' I'll meet wi' thee."
She leuch an' bade me let her hame,
Her mither sair wad flyte an' scauld;
But ere I quat my bonnie Bess,
Anither tale I trow she tauld.

On Tysday night, fu' weel I wat,
Wi' hinny words I row'd my tongue,
Raught down my plaid, an' stievely stak
Intil my neive a hazel rung.
Now when I con'd my artless tale
Gaun linkin' owre the lily lea,
Fu' weel I trow'd that ilka bush
Some jeering question speir'd at me.

The bleeter cry'd frae yont the loch,
"O hoolie, hoolie,—whare ye gaun?"
The craik reply'd frae mang the corn,
"Turn out your taes, my bonnie man."
An' soon I found, wi' shiv'rin' shanks,
My heart play dunt through bashfu' fear,
Whan glowrin' owre the kail-yard dyke
To see gin a' the coast was clear;

An' there, like ony nightly thief,
Wi' eerie swither lour'd awhile,
Till rallying ilka traitor nerve,
I lightly lanp outo'er the style:
Syne gae the glass twa cannie pats,
An' Bessie bade na lang frae me;
The rusty lock was ullied weel,
An' ilka hinge o' cheepin' free.

O say, ye haly minstrel band,
Wha saw the saft, the silken hour,
Though joys celestial on ye wait,
Say, was your bliss mair chastely pure?
Blythely hae I screw'd my pipes,
An' blythely play'd the lee-lang day,
An' happy been wi' bonnie Bess,
Ayont the mow amang the hay.

The Drinkin', O;

A SANG FOR THE LADIES.

TUNE—"*Dunbarton Drums.*"

Oh wae to the wearifu' drinkin', O!
That foe to reflection an' thinkin', O!
Our charms are gi'en in vain,
Social conversation's gane,
For the rattlin' o' guns an' the drinkin', O!

Oh why will you ply at the drinkin', O!
Which to weakness will soon lead you linkin', O!
These eyes that shine sae bright,
Soon will be a weary sight,
When ye're a' sittin' noddin' an' winkin', O!

For ever may we grieve for the drinkin', O!
The respect that is due daily sinkin', O!
Our presence sair abused,
An' our company refused,
An' its a' for the wearifu' drinkin', O!

Oh drive us not away wi' your drinkin', O!
We like your presence mair than ye're thinkin', O!
We'll gie ye another sang,
An' ye're no to think it lang,
For the sake o' your wearifu' drinkin', O!

Sweet delicacy, turn to us blinkin', O!
For by day the guns and swords still are clinkin', O!
An' at night the flowin' bowl
Bothers ilka manly soul,
Then there's naething but beblin' an' drinkin', O!

Gentle peace, come an' wean them frae drinkin', O!
Bring the little footy boy wi' you winkin', O!
Gar him thraw at ilka man,
An' wound as deep's he can,
Or we're ruin'd by the wearifu' drinkin', O!

Gracie Miller.

TUNE—"*Braes of Balquhidder.*"

"Little, queer bit auld body,
Whar ye gaun sae late at e'en?
Sic a massy auld body
I saw never wi' my e'en."
"I'm gaun to court the bonniest lass
That ever stepp'd in leather shoe."
"But little shabby auld body,
Where's the lass will look at you!

"Ere I war kiss'd wi' ane like you,
Or sic a man cam to my bed,
I'd rather kiss the hawkit cow,
An' in my bosom tak a taed.
Wha ever weds wi' sic a stock
Will be a gibe to a' the lave:
Little, stupit auld body,
Rather think upon your grave."

"But I'm sae deep in love wi' ane,
I'll wed or die, it maks na whether:
Oh! she's the prettiest, sweetest queen
That ever brush'd the dew frae heather!
The fairest Venus ever drawn
Is naething but a bogle till her;
She's fresher than the morning dawn,
An' hark—her name is Gracie Miller."

She rais'd her hands; her e'en they reel'd,
Then wi' a skirl outo'er she fell;
An' aye she leuch, an' aye she squeel'd,
"Hey, merey! body, that's mysel'!"
Then down he hurkled by her side,
An' kiss'd her hand, an' warmly woo'd her;
An' whiles she leuch, an' whiles she sigh'd,
An' lean'd her head upon his shoulder.

"O pity me, my bonnie Grace!
My words are true, ye needna doubt 'em;
Nae man can see your bonnie face
An' keep his senses a' about him."
"Troth, honest man, I ken'd langsyne
Nae ither lass could equal wi' me;
But yet the brag sae justly mine
Was tint, till you hae chane'd to see me.

"Though ye want yudith, gear, an' mense,
Ye hae a dash o' amorous fire;
Ye hae good taste, an' sterling sense,
An' ye sal hae your heart's desire."
Oh, woman! woman! after death,
If that vain nature still is given,
An' deils get leave to use their breath,
They'll flatter ye into hell frae heaven.

Birniebouzle.

AIR—"*Braes of Tullimett.*"

Will ye gang wi' me, lassie,
To the braes o' Birniebouzle?
Baith the yird an' sea, lassie,
Will I rob to fend ye.
I'll hunt the otter an' the brock,
The hart, the hare, an' heather-cock,
An' pu' the limpet aff the rock,
To fatten an' to mend ye.

If ye'll gang wi' me, lassie,
To the braes of Birniebouzle,
Till the day you dee, lassie,
Want shall ne'er come near ye.
The peats I'll carry in a skull,
The cod an' ling wi' hooks I'll pull,
An' reave the eggs o' mony a gull,
To please my denty dearie.

Sae canty will we be, lassie,
At the braes o' Birniebouzle,
Donald Gun and me, lassie,
Ever sal attend ye.
Though we hae nowther milk nor meal,
Nor lamb nor mutton, beef nor veal,
We'll fank the porpy and the seal,
And that's the way to fend ye.

An' ye sal gang sae braw, lassie,
At the kirk o' Birniebouzle,
Wi' littit brogues an' a', lassie,
Wow but ye'll be vaunty!
An' you sal wear, when you are wed,
The kirtle an' the Hieland plaid,
An' sleep upon a heather bed,
Sae cozie an' sae canty.

If ye'll but marry me, lassie,
At the kirk o' Birniebouzle,
A' my joy shall be, lassie,
Ever to content ye.
I'll bait the line and bear the pail,
An' row the boat and spread the sail,
An' drag the larry at my tail,
When mussel hives are plenty.

Then come awa' wi' me, lassie,
To the braes o' Birniebouzle;
Bonnie lassie, dear lassie,
You shall ne'er repent ye.
For you shall own a bught o' ewes,
A brace o' gaits, and byre o' cows,
An' be the lady o' my house,
An' lads an' lasses plenty.

Life is a Weary Cobble o' Care.

TUNE—"*Bob o' Dumblane.*"

Life is a weary, weary, weary,
Life is a weary cobble o' care;
The poets mislead you,
Wha ca' it a meadow,
For life is a puddle o' perfect despair.
We love an' we marry,
We fight an' we vary,
Get children to plague an' confound us for aye;
Our daughters grow limmers,
Our sons they grow sinners,
An' scorn ilka word that a parent can say.

Man is a steerer, steerer, steerer,
Man is a steerer, life is a pool;
We wrestle an' fustle,
For riches we bustle,
Then drap in the grave, an' leave a' to a fool.
Youth again could I see,
Women should wilie be,
Ere I were wheedled to sorrow an' pain;
I should take care o' them,
Never to marry them;
Hang me if buckled in wedlock again.

Jock an' his Mother.

AIR—"*Jackson's coy i' the morning.*"

"Now, mother, since a' our fine lasses ye saw
Yestreen at the wedding, sae trig an' sae braw,
Say, isna my Peggy the flower o' them a',
Our dance an' our party adorning?
Her form is sae fair, an' her features sae fine,
Her cheek like the lily anointit wi' wine,
The beam o' her bonnie blue e'e does outshine
The starn that appears i' the morning."

"Awa', ye poor booby! your skeel is but sma',
Gin ye marry Peggy ye'll ruin us a';
She lives like a lady, and dresses as braw,
But how will she rise i' the morning?
She'll lie in her bed till eleven, while ye
Maun rise an' prepare her her toast an' her tea;
Her frien's will be angry an' send ye to sea:
Dear Jock, tak a thought an' some warning."

"Oh, mother, sic beauty I canna forego,
I've sworn I will have her, come weal or come woe,
An' that wad be perjury black as a crow
To leave her an' think of another."
"An' if ye should wed her, your prospects are fine,
In meal-pocks and rags you will instantly shine;
Gae break your mad vow, an' the sin shall be mine—
Oh pity yoursel' an' your mother!"

"I'm sure my dear Peggy is lovely as May,
An' I saw her father this very same day,
An' tauld him I was for his daughter away."
"Sure, Jock, he wad tak it for scorning!"
"He said he would gie me a horse an' a cow,
A hunder good ewes, an' a pack o' his woo,
To stock the bit farm at the back o' the brow,
An' gie Maggy wark i' the morning."

"Your Peggy is bonnie, I weel maun allow,
An' really 'tis dangerous breakin' a vow;
Then tak her—my blessing on Peggy an' you
Shall tarry baith e'ening an' morning."
So Jock an' his Peggy in wedlock were bound,
The bridal was merry, the music did sound,
They went to their bed, while the glass it gaed round,
An' a' wished them joy i' the morning.

Athol Cummers.

One evening in the winter of 1800, I was sawing away on the fiddle with great energy and elevation; and having executed the strathspey called Athol Cummers much to my own satisfaction, my mother said to me, "Dear Jimmie, are there ony words to that tune?" "No that ever I heard, mother." "O man, it's a shame to hear sic a good tune an' nae words till't. Gae away ben the house, like a good lad, and mak' me a verse till't." The request was instantly complied with.

Duncan, lad, blaw the cummers,
Play me round the Athol cummers;
A' the din o' a' the drummers
Canna rouse like Athol cummers.
When I'm dowie, wet or weary,
Soon my heart grows light an' cheery,
When I hear the sprightly nummers
O' my dear, my Athol cummers!

When the fickle lasses vex me,
When the cares o' life perplex me,
When I'm fley'd wi' frightfu' rumours,
Then I lilt o' Athol cummers.
'Tis my cure for a' disasters,
Kebbit ewes an' crabbit masters,

Drifty nights an' dripping summers—
A' my joy is Athol cummers!

Ettrick banks an' braes are bonnie,
Yarrow hills as green as ony;
But in my heart nae beauty nummers
Wi' my dear, my Athol cummers.
Lomond's beauty nought surpasses,
Save Breadalbane's bonnie lasses;
But deep within my spirit slummers
Something sweet of Athol cummers.[1]

Willie Wastle.

TUNE—"*Macfarlane's Reel.*"

Willie Wastle lo'ed a lass
Was bright as ony rainbow;
A pretty dear I wat she was,
But saucy an' disdainfu':
She courtit was by mony a lad,
Wha teas'd her late an' early;
An' a' the wiles that Willie had
Could scarcely gain a parley.

The western sea had drown'd the sun;
The sternies blinkit clearly;
The moon was glentin' o'er the glen,
To light him to his deary.
She dwalt amang the mountains wild,
Nae wood nor bower to shade her;
But O! the scene look'd sweet an' mild.
For love o' them that staid there.

The cock that craw'd wi' yelpin' voice.
Nae claronet sae grand, O;
The bonnie burnie's purlin' noise,
Was sweet as the piano.
The little doggy at the door,
Into his arms he caught it,
An' hugg'd an' sleek'd it o'er and o'er,
For love o' them that aught it.

The house was thrang, the night was lang,
The auld gudewife bethought her,
To tak a lair was naething wrang
Beside her bonnie daughter.
Sly Willie enter'd unperceiv'd
To wake his charming Annie,
An' straight his jealous mind believ'd
The wife was shepherd Sawny.

Though milder than the southern breeze
When July's odours waftin',
Yet now his passion made a heeze,
An' a' his reason left him;
He gae the kerlin' sic a swinge,
He didna stand on prattlin',
Till down her throat, like bristled beans,
He gart her teeth gang rattlin'.

The doggy fawn'd but got a drub
Frae Willie's hand uncivil;
The burn was grown a drumly dub;
The cock a skirlin' devil.
The place appear'd a wilderness,
A desert, dank an' dreary;
For O, alas! the bonnie lass
Nae mair could mak it cheery?

O love, thou ray of life divine!
If rosy virtue guide thee,
What sense or feeling half sae fine!
What blessings to abide thee!
But jealousy, thy neighbour sour,
Deforms the finest feature,
An' maks a gloomy shade to lour
O'er fairest scenes in nature.

Auld John Borthick.

TUNE—"*The Toper's delight.*"

Auld John Borthick is gane to a weddin',
Frae Edinburgh o'er to the east neuk o' Fife;
His cheeks they war thin, an' his colour was fadin',
But auld John Borthick was mad for a wife.
His heart was as light as the lammie's in July,
An' saft as the mushroom that grows on the lea;
For bonny Miss Jeanie had squeez'd it to ulzie
Wi' ae wily blink o' her bonnie blue e'e.

He sat in a neuk in confusion an' anguish;
His gravat was suddled, but that wasna a';
His head wasna beld, but his brow was turn'd languish;
His teeth warna out, but they war turnin' sma':
He saw bonnie Jeanie afore him was landit:
He saw bonnie Jeanie was favour'd by a';
By lairds an' by nobles respectfully handit;
An' wow but Miss Jeanie was bonnie an' braw!

"Alas!" quo' John Borthick, "they'll spoil the poor lassie,
An' gar her believe that she carries the bell;
I'll ne'er hae a wife sae upliftit an' saucy,
I cou'dna preserve her a month to mysel'!
But yet she's sae handsome, sae modest, an' rosy,
The man wha attains her is blest for his life;
My heart is a yearning to lie in her bosy.
Oh! dear!" quo' John Borthick, "gin I had a wife!"

Lang Geordie was tipsy; he roar'd an' he rantit;
He dane'd an' he sang, an' was brimfu' o' glee;
Of riches, of strength, an' of favour he vauntit;
No man in the world sae mighty as he.
But in cam his wife; he grew sober an' sulky:
She bade him gang hame as he valued his life:
Then cuff'd him, an' ca'd him an ass an' a monkey:
"Ha! faith!" quo' John Borthick, "I'll ne'er hae a wife."

[1] Maidens.

The bride an' bridegroom to their bed they retired;
Miss Jeanie was there, an' John Borthick an' a':
He looked at Miss Jeanie, his heart was inspired;
Some said that the tears frae his haffits did fa'.
He saw the bridegroom tak the bride in his bosom;
He kiss'd her, caress'd her, an' ca'd her his life:
John turn'd him about; for he coudna compose him:
"O Lord!" quo' John Borthick, "gin I had a wife!"

The mornin' appeared, an' the cobble was ready;
John Borthick was first at the end o' the bay:
But oh, to his sorrow he miss'd the sweet lady;
A beau had her under his mantle away.
In less than a fortnight John Borthick was married,
To ane wha might weel be the joy o' his life:
But yet wi' confusion an' jealousy worried,
He curses the day that he married a wife.

CLASS FOURTH—NATIONAL SONGS.

Bauldy Frazer.

AIR—"*Whigs o' Fife.*"

My name is Bauldy Frazer, man;
I'm puir, an' auld, an' pale, an' wan:
I brak my shin, an' tint a han'
Upon Culloden lea, man.
Our Hielan' clans were bauld and stout,
An' thought to turn their faes about,
But gat that day a desperate rout,
An' owre the hills did flee, man.

Sic hurly-burly ne'er was seen,
Wi' cuffs, an' buffs, an' blindit e'en,
While Hielan' swords o' metal keen
War gleamin' grand to see, man.
The cannons routit in our face,
An' brak our banes an' raive our claes;
'Twas then we saw our ticklish case
Atween the deil an' sea, man.

Sure Charlie an' the brave Lochiel
Had been that time beside theirsel',
To plant us in the open fell,
In the artillery's e'e, man;
For had we met wi' Cumberland
By Athol braes or yonder strand,
The bluid o' a' the savage band
Had dy'd the German sea, man.

But down we drappit dadd for dadd;
I thought it should hae put me mad,
To see sae mony a Hielan' lad
Lie bluthrin' on the brae, man.
I thought we ance had won the fray;
We smasht ae wing till it gae way;
But the other side had lost the day,
An' skelpit fast awa, man.

When Charlie wi' Macpherson met,
Like Hay he thought him back to get;
"We'll turn," quo' he, "an' try them yet;
We'll conquer or we'll dee, man."
But Donald shumpit o'er the purn,
An' sware an aith she wadna turn,
Or sure she wad hae cause to mourn;
Then fast awa' did flee, man.

Oh! had you seen that hunt o' death!
We ran until we tint our breath,
Aye looking back for fear o' skaith,
Wi' hopeless shinin' e'e, man.
But Britain ever may deplore
That day upon Drumossie moor,
Whar thousands ta'en war drench'd in gore,
Or hang'd out-o'er a tree, man.

O Cumberland, what mean'd ye then,
To ravage ilka Hielan' glen?
Our crime was truth, an' love to ane,
We had nae spite at thee, man:
An' you or yours may yet be glad,
To trust the honest Hieland lad;
The bonnet blue, and belted plaid,
Will stand the last o' three, man.

Scotia's Glens.

AIR—"*Lord Ballandine's Delight.*" (*new set*).

'Mang Scotia's glens and mountains blue,
Where Gallia's lilies never grew,
Where Roman eagles never flew,
Nor Danish lions rallied;
Where skulks the roe in anxious fear,
Where roves the swift an' stately deer,
There live the lads to freedom dear,
By foreign yoke ne'er galled.

There woods grow wild on every hill,
There freemen wander at their will,
And Scotland will be Scotland still,
While hearts so brave defend her:
"Fear not, our sovereign Liege," they cry.
"We've flourished fair beneath thine eye;
For thee we'll fight, for thee we'll die,
Nor aught but life surrender!

"Since thou hast watch'd our every need,
And taught our navies wide to spread,
The smallest hair from thy gray head
No foreign foe shall sever:
Thy honour'd age in peace to save,
The sternest enemy we'll brave,
Or stem the fiercest ocean wave,
Nor heart nor hand shall waver!"

Though nations join yon tyrant's arm,
While Scotia's noble blood runs warm,
Our good old man we'll guard from harm,
Or fall in heaps around him.
Although the Irish harp were won,
And England's roses all o'errun,
'Mang Scotia's glens, with sword and gun,
We'll form a bulwark round him.

The Jubilee.

AIR—"*Miss Carmichael's Minuet.*"

Who will not join the lay,
And hail the auspicious day
That first gave great George the sway
Over our island?
Fifty long years are gone
Since he first fill'd the throne;
And high honours has he won
On sea and by land.

Think on his heart of steel;
Think on his life so leal;
Think how he's watch'd our weal,
Till seiz'd with blindness!
In mercy first sent to us;
In love so long lent to us;
Grateful, let's vent our vows
For Heaven's kindness.

No foeman dare steer to us,
Nor tyrant come near to us;
Of all that's dear to us
He's the defender.
Raise the song! raise it loud!
Of our old king we're proud!
George the just, George the good,
Still reigns in splendour!

The Auld Highlandman.

AIR—"*Killiecrankie.*"

Hersel pe auchty years an' twa,
Te twenty-tird o' May, man;
She twell amang te Hielan hills,
Ayont the rifer Spey, man.
Tat year tey foucht the Sherra-muir,
She first peheld te licht, man:
Tey shot my father in tat stoure—
A plaguit, vexin' spite, man.

I've feucht in Scotland here at hame,
In France and Shermanie, man;
And cot tree tespurt pluddy oons,
Beyond te 'Lantic sea, man:
But wae licht on te nasty gun,
Tat ever she pe porn, man;
While coot klymore te tristle gaird,
Her leaves pe never torn, man.

Ae tay I shot, and shot, and shot,
Whane'er it eam my turn, man;
Put a' te force tat I could gie,
Te powter wadna purn, man.
A filty loun eam wi' his gun,
Resolvt to too me harm, man:
And wi' te tirk upon her nose
Ke me a pluddy arm, man.

I flang my gun wi' a' my micht,
And felt his nepour teit, man;
Tan drew my swort, and at a straik
Hewt aff te haf o's heit, man.
Be vain to tell o' a' my tricks:
My oons pe nae tiserace, man:
Ter no pe yin pehint my back,
Ter a' pefor my face, man.

Buccleuch's Birth-Day.

TUNE—"*Macfarlane's Reel.*"

O fy, let's a' be merry, boys,
O fy, let's a' be merry;
This is a day we should rejoice;
Then fy, let's a' be merry.
Our auld gudeman is hale an' free,
An' that should surely cheer us;
An' the flowers o' a' the south countrie
Are sweetly smiling near us.
Our day's nae done though it be dark;
Put round the port an' sherry;
An' ask at James o' the *Tower o' Sark*,
If we should nae a' be merry.

Blest be the day the Scot did gain
His name and a' surrounding,
"When in the cleuch the buck was ta'en,"
While hound and horn was sounding.
But ten times blessed be this day
That brought us noble Harry;
A nation's pride, a country's stay,
A friend that disna vary.
Then let's be merry ane an' a',
An' drink the port an' sherry;
An' spier at George o' the *Carterha'*,
If we should nae a' be merry.

Then let us drink to brave Buccleuch,
An' our auld honest Geordie;
For, seek the country through an' through,
We'll light on few sae worthy:
The one protects our native land,
And on the sea keeps order;
The other guides the farmer's hand,
And rules the Scottish Border.

Then merry, merry, let us be,
An' drink the port an' sherry;
I'll refer to Wat o' the Frostylee,[1]
If we should nae a' be merry.

Highland Harry back again.

This and the two following songs were composed for, and sung at, the celebration of the Earl of Dalkeith's birth-day, at Selkirk, on the 24th May.

Ye forest flowers so fresh and gay,
Let all your hearts be light and fain;
For once this blest, auspicious day,
Brought us a Harry back again.
The wild-bird's hush'd on Ettrick braes,
And northward turns the nightly wain;
Let's close with glee this wale of days,
To us so welcome back again.

May blessings wait that noble Scot,
Who loves to hear the shepherd's strain;
And long in peace, may't be his lot
To see this day come back again.
His heart so kind, his noble mind,
His loyal course without a stain,
And choice's fair, all, all declare,
He'll just be Harry back again.

Hap an' rowe the feetie o't.

TUNE—"*Grant's Rant.*"

Gae hap an' rowe the feetie o't;
Gae hap an' rowe the feetie o't;
We'll never trow we hae a bairn
Unless we hear the greetie o't.

Auld fashion'd bodies whine an' tell,
In prophecies precarious,
That our young Charlie never will
Be sic a man as Harry was.
Auld Harry was an honest man,
An' nouther flush nor snappy, O;
An' a' the gear that e'er he wan,
Was spent in makin' happy, O.
Gae hap an' rowe, &c.

There grew a tree at our house-end,
We hack'd it down for fire, O;
An' frae the root, there did ascend
A straughter ane an' higher, O:
Then what's to hinder our young blade,
When sic a sample's shown him, O,
To trace the steps his father gaed,
An' e'en to gang beyon' them, O?
Gae hap an' rowe, &c.

This day we'll chime in canty rhyme
What spirit we wad hae him, O,
An' if he run as he's begun,
Our blessin' aye we'll gie him, O:
We wish him true unto his king,
An' for his country ready, O;
A steady friend, a master kind,
An' nouther blate nor greedy, O.
Gae hap an' rowe, &c.

While he shall grace the noble name,
We'll drink his health in sherry, O;
An' aye this day we'll dance an' play
In reels an' jigs sae merry, O:
But if it's ken'd his actions tend
To ony ill behavin', O,
This bonny twenty-fourth o' May
In crape we's a' be wavin', O.
Gae hap an' rowe the feetie o't;
Gae hap an' rowe the feetie o't;
We'll aye believe 'tis but a bairn
If ance we hear the greetie o't.

Born, Laddie.

TUNE—"*Somebody.*"

Let wine gae round, an' music play,
This is the twenty-fourth o' May!
An' on this bonny blythesome day
Our young gudeman was born, laddie.
The Esk shall dance an' Teviot sing,
The Yarrow's bonnie banks shall ring,
An' Ettrick's muse shall streek her wing,
This day that he was born, laddie.
Born, laddie! born, laddie!
Ilka e'en an' morn, laddie,
We will bless the happy day
When Charlie he was born, laddie.

May health an' happiness attend
The chief, for truth an' honour ken'd!
An' may he never want a friend
To cheer him when forlorn, laddie!
To him an' his we're a' in debt,
An' lang hae been, an' will be yet;
But may he thrive till we forget
The day when he was born, laddie!
Born, laddie, &c.

But should he stern misfortune find,
Then may he calmly call to mind,
'Tis but the lot of all mankind
That ever yet were born, laddie.

[1] The above song was composed and sung at the celebration of the Duke of Buccleuch's birth-day at Langholm. The three gentlemen referred to, were Messrs. James Church, George Park, and Walter Borthwick, managers of the ball for that year, 1809.

If pride shall e'er his bosom swell,
An' kindness frae his heart repel,
'Twill mind him, he maun die himsel',
As sure as he was born, laddie.
Born, laddie, &c.

Donald M'Donald.

AIR—"*Woo'd an' married an' a'.*"

My name it is Donald M'Donald,
I live in the Hielands sae grand;
I hae follow'd our banner, and will do,
Wherever my Maker has land.
When rankit amang the blue bonnets,
Nae danger can fear me ava;
I ken that my brethren around me
Are either to conquer or fa'.
Brogues an' brochen an' a',
Brochen an' brogues an' a';
An' is nae her very weel aff,
Wi' her brogues an' brochen an' a'?

What though we befriendit young Charlie?
To tell it I dinna think shame;
Poor lad! he came to us but barely,
An' reckon'd our mountains his hame.
'Twas true that our reason forbade us,
But tenderness carried the day;
Had Geordie come friendless amang us,
Wi' him we had a' gane away,
Sword an' buckler an' a',
Buckler an' sword an' a';
Now for George we'll encounter the devil,
Wi' sword an buckler an' a'!

An' oh, I wad eagerly press him
The keys o' the East to retain;
For should he gie up the possession,
We'll soon hae to force them again.
Than yield up an inch wi' dishonour,
Though it were my finishing blow,
He aye may depend on M'Donald,
Wi' his Hielanders a' in a row;
Knees an' elbows an' a',
Elbows an' knees an' a';
Depend upon Donald M'Donald,
His knees an' elbows an' a'!

Wad Bonaparte land at Fort-William,
Auld Europe nae langer should grane;
I laugh when I think how we'd gall him,
Wi' bullet, wi' steel, an' wi' stane;
Wi' rocks o' the Nevis an' Gairy
We'd rattle him off frae our shore,
Or lull him asleep in a cairny,
An' sing him—"Lochaber no more!"
Stanes an' bullets an' a',
Bullets an' stanes an' a';
We'll finish the Corsican callan
Wi' stanes an' bullets an' a'!

For the Gordon is good in a hurry,
An' Campbell is steel to the bane,
An' Grant, an' M'Kenzie, an' Murray,
An' Cameron will hurkle to nane;
The Stuart is sturdy an' loyal,
An' sae is M'Leod an' M'Kay;
An' I their gude-brither, M'Donald,
Shall ne'er be the last in the fray!
Brogues an' brochen an' a',
Brochen an' brogues an' a';
An' up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet,
The kilt an' the feather an' a'![1]

By a Bush.

TUNE—"*Maid that tends the Goats.*"

By a bush on yonder brae,
Where the airy Benger rises,
Sandy tun'd his artless lay;
Thus he sung the lee-lang day:
"Thou shalt ever be my theme,
Yarrow, winding down the hollow,
With thy bonny sister stream
Sweeping through the broom so yellow.
On these banks thy waters lave,
Oft the warrior found a grave.

[1] I once heard the above song sung in the theatre at Lancaster, when the singer substituted the following lines of his own for the last verse:

"For Jock Bull he is good in a hurry,
An' Sawney is steel to the bane,
An' wee Davie Welsh is a widdy,
An' Paddy will hurkle to nane;
They'll a' prove baith sturdy and loyal,
Come dangers around them what may,
An' I, their gudebrither, M'Donald,
Shall ne'er be the last in the fray!" &c.

It took exceedingly well, and was three times encored, and there was I sitting in the gallery, applauding as much as any body. My vanity prompted me to tell a jolly Yorkshire manufacturer that night that I was the author of the song. He laughed excessively at my assumption, and told the landlady that he took me for a half-crazed Scots pedlar.

Another anecdote concerning this song I may mention; and I do it with no little pride, as it is a proof of the popularity of "Donald M'Donald" among a class, to inspire whom with devotion to the cause of their country was at the time a matter of no little consequence. Happening upon one occasion to be in a wood in Dumfriesshire, through which wood the highroad passed, I heard a voice singing; and a turn of the road soon brought in sight a soldier, who seemed to be either travelling home upon furlough, or returning to his regiment. When the singer approached nearer I distinguished the notes of my own song of "Donald M'Donald." As the lad proceeded with his song, he got more and more into the spirit of the thing, and on coming to the end,

"An' up wi' the bonnie blue bonnet
The kilt and the feather an' a'!"

in the height of his enthusiasm, he hoisted his cap on the end of his staff, and danced it about triumphantly. I stood ensconced behind a tree, and heard and saw all without being observed.

"Oft on thee the silent wain
Saw the Douglas' banners streaming;
Oft on thee the hunter train
Sought the shelter'd deer in vain;
Oft, in thy green dells and bowers,
Swains have seen the fairies riding;
Oft the snell and sleety showers
Found in thee the warrior hiding.
Many a wild and bloody scene
On thy bonnie banks have been.

"Now, the days of discord gane,
Henry's kindness keeps us cheery;
While his heart shall warm remain,
Dule will beg a hauld in vain.
Bloodless now, in many hues
Flow'rets bloom, our hills adorning;
There my Jenny milks her ewes,
Fresh an' ruddy as the morning:
Mary Scott could ne'er outvie
Jenny's hue an' glancing eye.

"Wind, my Yarrow, down the howe,
Forming bows o' dazzling siller;
Meet thy titty yont the knowe:
Wi' my love I'll join like you.
Flow, my Ettrick, it was thee
Into life wha first did drap me:
Thee I've sung, an' when I dee
Thou wilt lend a sod to hap me.
Passing swains shall say, and weep,
Here our Shepherd lies asleep."

Prince Owen and the Seer.

To an old Welsh air.

"O say, mighty Owen, why beams thy bright eye?
And why shakes thy plume, when the winds are so still?
What means the loud blast of the bugle so nigh,
And the wild warlike music I hear on the hill?"
"We are free, thou old seer; the Britons are free!
Our foes have all fallen or shrunk from our view;
And free as the bird of the mountain are we,
The roe of the forest, or fish of the sea.
My country! my brethren! my joy is for you;
My country! my brethren! my country! my brethren!
My country! my brethren! my joy is for you."

"Brave Owen, my old heart is fired by thine!
My dim eyes they glisten like tears of the morn.
Thy valour us guarded; thy wisdom has warded
The danger that threatened to lay us forlorn.
And when you and I have sunk into our graves;
When ages o'er ages time's standard shall rear;
When the bards have forgot o'er our ashes to weep,
When they scarcely can point out the place where we sleep;
That freedom shall flourish we've purchas'd so dear;
That freedom shall flourish, &c.

"The Arm that created our shores and our glens,
Design'd they unconquer'd should ever remain;
That Power, who inspired the hearts of our clans,
Design'd them, inviolate their rights to maintain.
Our castle the mountain; our bulwark the wave;
True *courage* and *jealousy*, buckler and shield;
We'll laugh at the force of the world combin'd,
And oppression shall fly like the cloud in the wind.
But the isles and the ocean to Britain must yield;
The isles and the ocean; the isles and the ocean;
The isles and the ocean to Britons must yield."

My Native Isle.

TUNE—"*Sir Alex. Macdonald Lochart's Strathspey.*"

And must I leave my native isle!—
Fair friendship's eye, affection's smile;
The mountain sport, the angler's wile,
The birch an' weeping willow, O!
The Highland glen, the healthy gale,
The gloaming glee, the evening tale;
And must I leave my native vale,
And brave the boisterous billow, O?

How sweet to climb the mountain high,
While dawning gilds the eastern sky;
Or in the shade at noon to lie
Upon the fell so airy, O.
And, when the sun is sinking low,
Through woodland walks to wander slow;
Or kindly in my plaid to rowe
My gentle rosy Mary, O.

My native isle! I love thee well;
I love thee more than I can tell:
Accept my last, my sad farewell;
In thee I may not tarry, O.
What makes my bosom heave so high?
What makes the dew-drop gild mine eye?
Alas! that dew would quickly dry,
If 'twere not for my Mary, O!

O youth, thou season light and gay,
How soon thy pleasures melt away!
Like dream dispell'd by dawning day,
Or waking wild vagary, O.
The thrush shall quit the woodland dale,
The lav'rock cease the dawn to hail,
Ere I forget my native vale,
Or my sweet lovely Mary, O!

Honest Duncan.

Now wha is yon comes o'er the knowe,
Sae stalwart an' sae brawny?
His hurchin beard, an' towzy pow,
Bespeak some Highland Sawney.
We'll hurt his spirit if we can,
Wi' taunt or jibe uncivil;
Before I saw a Highlandman,
I'd rather see the devil.

"Now wha are ye wi' tartan trews!
Or where hae ye been reaving?
Nae doubt to cleed your naked houghs
In England ye've been thieving."
"She no pe heed ou, shentlemen,
Te whisky mak you trunken;
But, when I'm in the Athol glen,
Te ca' me 'onest Duncan."

"An honest man in Athol glen!
We fear there's ne'er anither.
Nae wonder ye're sae lank an' lean,
Where a' are knaves thegither."
"Hu, shay, Cot tamn, say tat akain!
Of her you might pe speakin';
But try misca' my countrymen,
I'll smash you like a breaken."

From words the blows began to pass,
Stout Duncan sair laid on 'em;
At length he tumbled on the grass,
Wi' a' his foes aboon him.
But soon he rais'd his dusty brow,
An' bellow'd aiths right awfu';
Then whippit out a lang *skein-dhu*,
An' threaten'd things unlawfu'.

Then he ran here, an' he ran there,
The Highland durk sae fley'd 'em;
But Duncan chas'd, wi' hurdies bare,
An' ane by ane repaid 'em.
His Highland durk, an' heavy licks,
Soon taught them wha they strove wi';
An' he brought part o' a' their breeks
To Scotland for a trophy.

"Now, you at nakit doups may laugh,
An' ye'll get some to join ye;
But troth you no maun cang to scaff
At tough auld Caledony.
I'e mony lad in Athol glen
Will join you like a brither;
But should you laugh at Highlandmen,
She a' tak low thegither."

Highland Laddie.

"Were ye at Drummossie moor,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie?
Saw ye the Duke the clans o'erpower,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie?"

"Yes, I have seen that fatal fray,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie;
And my heart bleeds from day to day,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

Many a lord of high degree,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
Will never more their mountains see,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie;
Many a chief of birth and fame,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
Are hunted down like savage game,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

What could the remnant do but yield,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie?
A generous chief twice gains the field,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.
Posterity will ne'er us blame,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie;
But brand with blood the Brunswick name,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

Oh may it prove for Scotland's good!
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie;
But why so drench our glens with blood?
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.
Duke William nam'd, or yonder moor,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie,
Will fire our blood for evermore,
Bonny laddie, Highland laddie.

The Emigrant.

AIR—"*Lochaber no more.*"

May morning had shed her red streamers on high,
O'er Canada, frowning all pale on the sky;
Still dazzling and white was the robe that she wore,
Except where the mountain-wave dash'd on the shore.
Far heav'd the young sun, like a lamp, on the wave,
And loud scream'd the gull o'er his foam-beaten cave,
When an old lyart swain on a headland stood high,
With the staff in his hand, and the tear in his eye.

His old tartan plaid, and his bonnet so blue,
Declar'd from what country his lineage he drew;
His visage so wan, and his accents so low,
Announc'd the companion of sorrow and woe.
"Ah welcome, thou sun, to thy canopy grand,
And to me! for thou com'st from my dear native land!
Again dost thou leave that sweet isle of the sea,
To beam on these winter-bound valleys and me!

How sweet in my own native valley to roam!
Each face was a friend's and each house was a home;
To drag our live thousands from river or bay;
Or chase the dun deer o'er the mountain so gray.
Here daily I wander to sigh on the steep,
My old bosom friend was laid low in yon deep;
My family and friends, to extremity driven,
Contending for life both with earth and with heaven.

My country, they said—but they told me a lie—
Her valleys were barren, inclement her sky;
Even now in the glens, 'mong her mountains so blue
The primrose and daisy are blooming in dew.
How could she expel from those mountains of heath
The clans who maintain'd them in danger and death!
Who ever were ready the broad-sword to draw
In defence of her honour, her freedom, and law.

We stood by our Stuart, till one fatal blow
Loos'd ruin triumphant, and valour laid low:
Our chief, whom we trusted, and liv'd but to please,
Then turn'd us adrift to the storms and the seas.
O gratitude! where did'st thou linger the while?
What region afar is illum'd with thy smile?
That orb of the sky for a home will I crave,
When yon sun rises red on the Emigrant's grave."

The British Tar.

AIR—"*Pull Away.*"

I'm a jolly British tar,
  Pull away, noble boys!
I'm a jolly British tar,
  Pull away.
I'm a jolly British tar
Who have borne her thunders far,
Yet I'm here without a scar;
  Pull away, noble boys!
Yet I'm here without a scar,
  Pull away.

I've with Nelson fac'd the foe,
  Pull away, noble boys!
I've with Nelson fac'd the foe;
  Pull away.
I've with Nelson fac'd the foe;
Quite enough to let you know
That I conquer where I go,
  Pull away, noble boys!
Britons conquer where they go,
  Pull away.

We've stood many a dreadful shock,
  Pull away, noble boys!
We've stood many a dreadful shock,
  Pull away.
We've stood many a dreadful shock;
Like the thunder-stricken rock,
We've been splinter'd—never broke!
  Pull away.

Round the earth our glory rings,
  Pull away, noble boys!
Round the earth our glory rings,
  Pull away.
Round the earth our glory rings,
At the thought my bosom springs;
Of the ocean we're the kings,
  Pull away, noble boys!
Of the ocean we're the kings,
  Pull away.

Caledonia.

AIR—"*Lord Aboyne.*"

Caledonia! thou land of the mountain and rock,
  Of the ocean, the mist, and the wind—
Thou land of the torrent, the pine, and the oak,
  Of the roebuck, the hart, and the hind:
Though bare are thy cliffs, and though barren thy glens,
  Though bleak thy dun islands appear,
Yet kind are the hearts, and undaunted the clans,
  That roam on these mountains so drear!

A foe from abroad, or a tyrant at home,
  Could never thy ardour restrain;
The marshall'd array of imperial Rome
  Essay'd thy proud spirit in vain.
Firm seat of religion, of valour, of truth,
  Of genius unshackled and free,
The Muses have left all the vales of the south,
  My loved Caledonia, for thee!

Sweet land of the bay and the wild-winding deeps,
  Where loveliness slumbers at even,
While far in the depth of the blue water sleeps
  A calm little motionless heaven!
Thou land of the valley, the moor, and the hill,
  Of the storm and the proud rolling wave—
Yes, thou art the land of fair liberty still,
  And the land of my forefathers' grave!

POETICAL TALES AND BALLADS.

Connel of Dee.

Connel went out by a blink of the moon
To his light little bower in the deane;
He thought they had gi'en him his supper owre soon,
And that still it was lang until e'en.
Oh! the air was so sweet, and the sky so serene,
And so high his soft languishment grew—
That visions of happiness danc'd o'er his mind;
He long'd to leave parent and sisters behind,
For he thought that his Maker to him was unkind:
For that high were his merits he knew.

Sooth, Connel was halesome, and stalwart to see,
The bloom of fayre yudith he wore;
But the lirk of displeasure hang over his bree,
Nae glisk of contentment it bore;
He lang'd for a wife with a mailen and store;
He grevit in idless to lie;
Afar from his cottage he wished to remove
To wassail and waik, and unchided to rove,
And beik in the cordial transports of love
All under a kindlier sky.

Oh sweet was the fa' of that gloaming to view!
The day-lighte crap laigh on the doon,
And left its pale borders abeigh on the blue,
To mix wi' the beams of the moon.
The hill hang its skaddaw the greinwud aboon,
The houf of the bodyng Benshee;
Slow o'er him were sailing the cloudlets of June;
The beetle began his wild airel to tune,
And sang on the wynde with ane eirysome croon,
Away on the breeze of the Dee!

With haffat on lufe poor Connel lay lorn,
He languishit for muckle and mair;
His bed of greine hether he cynit to scorn,
The bygane he doughtna weel bear.
Attour him the greine leife was fannyng the air,
In noiseless and flychtering play;
The hush of the water fell saft on his ear,
And he fand as gin sleep, wi' her gairies, war near,
Wi' her freaks and her ferlies and phantoms of fear,
But he eidently wysit her away.

Short time had he sped in that sellible strife
Ere he saw a young maiden stand by,
Who seem'd in the bloom and the bell of her life;
He wist not that ane was sae nigh!
But sae sweet was her look, and sae saft was her eye,
That his heart was all quaking with love;
And then there was kything a dimple sae sly,
At play on her cheek, of the moss-rose's dye,
That kindled the heart of poor Connel on high
With ravishment deadlye to prove.

He deemed her a beautiful spirit of night,
And eiry was he to assay;
But he found she was mortal with thrilling delight,
For her breath was like zephyr of May;
Her eye was the dew-bell, the beam of the day,
And her arm it was softer than silk;
Her hand was so warm, and her lip was so red,
Her slim taper waiste so enchantingly made,
And some beauties moreover that cannot be said—
Of bosom far whiter than milk!

Poor Connel was reaved of all power and of speech,
His frame grew all powerless and weak;
He neither could stir, nor caress her, nor fleech;
He trembled, but word couldna speak.
But Oh! when his lips touched her soft rosy cheek,
The channels of feeling ran dry;
He found that like emmets his life-blood it crept,
His liths turned as limber as dud that is steeped;
He streckit his limbs, and he moaned and he wept,
And for love he was just gaun to die.

The damsel beheld, and she raised him so kind,
And she said, "My dear beautiful swain,
Take heart till I tell you the hark of my mind;
I'm weary of living my lane;
I have castles, and lands, and flocks of my ain,
But want ane my gillour to share;
A man that is hale as the hart on the hill,
As stark, and as kind, is the man to my will,
Who has slept on the heather and drank of the rill,
And, like you, gentle, amorous, and fair.

"I often hae heard, that like you there was nane,
And I anee got a glisk of thy face;
Now far have I ridden, and far have I gane,
In hopes thou wilt nurice the grace
To make me thy ain—Oh, come to my embrace,
For I love thee as dear as my life!
I'll make thee a laird of the boonmost degree,
My castles and lands I'll give freely to thee;
Though rich and abundant, thine own they shall be,
If thou wilt but make me thy wife."

Oh! never was man sae delighted and fain!
He bowed a consent to her will;

Kind Providence thankit again and again,
And 'gan to display his rude skill
In leifu' endearment; and thought it nae ill
To kiss the sweet lips of the fair,
And press her to lie, in that gloamin' sae still,
Adown by his side in the howe of the hill,
For the water flowed sweet, and the sound of the rill
Would soothe every sorrow and care.

No—she wadna lie by the side of a man
Till the rites of the marriage were bye.
Away they hae sped; but soon Connel began,
For his heart it was worn to a sigh,
To fondle, and simper, and look in her eye.
Oh! direful to bear was his wound!
When on her fair neck fell his fingers sae dun—
It strak through his heart like the shot of a gun!
He felt as the sand of existence were run:
He trembled, and fell to the ground.

O Connel, dear Connel, be patient a while!
These wounds of thy bosom will heal,
And thou with thy love mayest walk many a mile
Nor transport nor passion once feel.
Thy spirits once broke on electeric wheel,
Cool reason her empire shall gain;
And haply, repentance in dowy array,
And laithly disgust may arise in thy way,
Encumbering the night, and o'ercasting the day,
And turn all those pleasures to pain.

The mansion is gained, and the bridal is past,
And the transports of wedlock prevail;
The lot of poor Connel the shepherd is cast
'Mid pleasures that never can fail.
The balms of Arabia sweeten the gale,
The tables for ever are spread
With damask, and viands and heart-cheering wine
Their splendour and elegance fully combine;
His lawns they are ample, his bride is divine,
And of goud-fringed silk is his bed.

The transports of love gave rapture, and flew:
The banquet soon sated and cloyed;
Nae mair they delighted, nae langer were new,
They could not be ever enjoyed!
He felt in his bosom a fathomless void,
A yearning again to be free;
Than all that voluptuous sickening store,
The wine that he drank and the robes that he wore,
His diet of milk had delighted him more
Afar on the hills of the Dee.

Oh, oft had he sat by the clear springing well,
And dined from his wallet full fain!
Then sweet was the scent of the blue heather-bell,
And free was his bosom of pain.
The laverock was lost in the lift, but her strain
Came trilling so sweetly from far,
To rapture the hour he would wholly resign,
He would listen, and watch, till he saw her decline,
And the sun's yellow beam on her dappled breast shine,
Like some little musical star.

And then he wad lay his blue bonnet aside,
And turn his rapt eyes to the heaven,
And bless his kind Maker who all did provide;
And beg that he might be forgiven,
For his sins were like crimson—all bent and uneven
The path he had wilesomely trod;
Then who the delight of his bosom could tell!
Oh, sweet was that meal by his pure mountain well;
And sweet was its water he drank from the shell,
And peaceful his moorland abode.

But now was he deaved and babbled outright,
By gossips in endless array,
Who thought not of sin nor of Satan aright,
Nor the dangers that mankind belay;
Who joked about heaven, and scorned to pray,
And gloried in that was a shame.
Oh, Connel was troubled at things that befell!
So different from scenes he had once loved so well,
He deemed he was placed on the confines of hell,
And fand like the sa'ur of its flame!

Of bonds and of law-suits he still was in doubt,
And old debts coming due every day;
And a thousand odd things he ken'd naething about
Kept him in continued dismay.
At board he was awkward, nor wist what to say.
Nor what his new honours became;
His guests they wad mimic and laugh in their sleeve;
He blushed, and he faltered, and scarce dought believe
That men were so base as to smile and deceive;
Or eynied of him to make game!

Still franker and freer his gossippers grew,
And preyed upon him and his dame;
Their jests and their language to Connel were new,
It was slander, and cursing, and shame.
He groaned in his heart, and he thought them to blame
For revel and rout without end:
He saw himself destined to pamper and feed
A race whom he hated, a profligate breed,
The scum of existence to vengeance decreed,
Who laughed at their God and their friend.

He saw that in wickedness all did delight,
And he ken'dna what length it might bear;
They drew him to evil by day and by night,
To scenes that he trembled to share.
His heart it grew sick, and his head it grew sair,
And he thought what he dared not to tell:
He thought of the far distant hills of the Dee;
Of his cake, and his cheese, and his lair on the lea;
Of the laverock that hung on the heaven's e'e-bree;
His prayer, and his clear mountain well.

His breast he durst sparingly trust wi' the thought
Of the virtuous days that were fled;
Yet still his kind lady he loved as he ought,
Or soon from that scene he had fled.
It now was but rarely she honoured his bed—
'Twas modesty, heightening her charms!

A delicate feeling that man cannot ween:
O Heaven! each night from his side she had been—
He found it at length——nay, he saw't wi' his een,
She slept in a paramour's arms!!!

It was the last pang that the spirit could bear,
Destruction and death was the meed:
For forfeited vows there was nought too severe;
Even conscience applauded the deed.
His mind was decided, her doom was decreed;
He led her to chamber apart,
To give her to know of his wrongs he had sense,
To chide and upbraid her in language intense,
And kill her, at least, for her heinous offence—
A crime at which demons would start!

With grievous reproaches, in agonized zeal,
Stern Connel his lecture began;
He mentioned her crime!—She turned on her heel
And her mirth to extremity ran.
"Why, that was the fashion!—no sensible man
Could e'er of such freedom complain.
What was it to him? there were maidens enow
Of the loveliest forms, and the loveliest hue,
Who blithely would be his companions, he knew,
If he wearied of lying his lane."

How Connel was shocked!—but his fury still rose,
He shivered from toe to the crown;
His hair stood like heath on the mountain that grows,
And each hair had a life of its own.
"O thou most"—But whereto his passion had flown
No man to this day can declare.
For his dame, with a frown, laid her hand on his mouth,
That hand once as sweet as the breeze of the south;
That hand that gave pleasures and honours and routh;
And she said, with a dignified air:—

"Peace, booby! if life thou regardest, beware;
I have had some fair husbands ere now;
They wooed, and they flattered, they sighed and they sware,
At length they grew irksome like you.
Come hither one moment, a sight I will show
That will teach thee some breeding and grace."
She opened a door, and there Connel beheld
A sight that to trembling his spirit impelled;
A man standing chained, who nor 'plained, nor rebelled,
And that man had a sorrowful face.

Down creaked a trap-door, on which he was placed,
Right softly and slowly it fell;
And the man seemed in terror, and strangely amazed,
But why, Connel could not then tell.
He sunk and he sunk as the vice did impel;
At length, as far downward he drew,
Good Lord! In a trice, with the pull of a string,
A pair of dread shears, like the thunderbolt's wing,
Came snap on his neck, with a terrible spring,
And severed it neatly in two.

Adown fell the body—the head lay in sight,
The lips in a moment grew wan;
The temple just quivered, the eye it grew white,
And upward the purple threads span.
The dark crooked streamlets along the boards ran,
Thin pipings of reek could be seen;
Poor Connel was blinded, his lugs how they sung!
He looked once again, and he saw like the tongue,
That motionless out 'twixt the livid lips hung,
Then mirkness set over his e'en.

He turned and he dashed his fair lady aside;
And off like the lightning he broke,
By staircase and gallery, with horrified stride;
He turned not, he staid not, nor spoke;
The iron-spiked court-gate he could not unlock,
His haste was beyond that of man;
He stopped not to rap, and he staid not to call,
With ram-race he cleared at a bensil the wall,
And headlong beyond got a grievous fall,
But he rose, and he ran, and he ran!

As stag of the forest, when fraudfully coiled,
And mured up in barn for a prey,
Sees his dappled comrades dishonoured and soiled
In their blood, on some festival day,
Bursts all intervention, and hies him away,
Like the wind over holt, over lea:
So Connel pressed on, all encumbrance he threw,
Over height, over hollow, he lessened to view:
It may not be said that he ran, for he flew,
Straight on for the hills of the Dee.

The contrair of all other runners in life,
His swiftness increased as he flew,
But be it remembered, he ran from a wife,
And a trap-door that sunk on a screw.
His prowess he felt and decidedly knew,
So much did his swiftness excel,
That he skimmed the wild paths like a thing of the mind,
And the stour from each footstep was seen on the wind,
Distinct by itself for a furlong behind,
Before that it mingled or fell.

He came to a hill, the ascent it was steep,
And much did he fear for his breath;
He halted, he ventured behind him to peep,—
The sight was a vision of death!
His wife and her paramours came on the path,
Well mounted, with devilish speed:
O Connel, poor Connel, thy hope is a wreck!
Sir, run for thy life, without stumble or check,
It is thy only stake, the last chance for thy neck,—
Strain Connel, or death is thy meed!

Oh wend to the right, to the woodland betake;
Gain that, and yet safe thou may'st be:
How fast they are gaining! Oh stretch to the brake!
Poor Connel, 'tis over with thee!
In the breath of the horses his yellow locks flee,
The voice of his wife's in the van;

Even that was not needful to heighten his fears,
He sprang o'er the bushes, he dash'd thro' the briers,
For he thought of the trap-door and damnable shears,
And he cried to his God, and he ran.

Through gallwood and bramble he floundered amain,
No bar his advancement could stay;
Though heels-over-head whirled again and again,
Still faster he gained on his way.
This moment on swinging bough powerless he lay,
The next he was flying along
So lightly, he scarce made the green leaf to quake;
Impetuous he splashed through the bog and the lake,
He rainbowed the hawthorn, he needled the brake,
With power supernaturally strong.

The riders are foiled, and far lagging behind,
Poor Connel has leisure to pray;
He hears their dread voices around on the wind,
Still farther and farther away—
"O Thou who sit'st thron'd o'er the fields of the day,
Have pity this once upon me!
Deliver from those that are hunting my life,
From *traps* of the wicked that round me are rife,
And oh, above all, from the rage of a wife,
And guide to the hills of the Dee!

"And if ever I grumble at Providence more,
Or scorn my own mountains of heath;
If ever I yearn for that sin-breeding ore,
Or shape to complaining a breath,
Then may I be nipt with the scissors of death"—
No farther could Connel proceed:
He thought of the snap that he saw in the nook;
Of the tongue that came out, and the temple that shook,
Of the blood and the reek, and the deadening look:
He lifted his bonnet and fled.

He wandered and wandered thro' woodlands of gloom,
And sorely he sobbed and he wept;
At cherk of the pyat, or bee's passing boom,
He started, he listened, he leaped.
With eye and with ear a strict guardship he kept:
No scene could his sorrows beguile:
At length he stood lone by the side of the Dee;
It was placid and deep, and as broad as a sea;
Oh, could he get over, how safe he might be,
And gain his own mountains the while!

'Twas dangerous to turn, but proceeding was worse,
For the country grew open and bare,
No forest appeared, neither broomwood nor gorse,
Nor furze that would shelter a hare.
Ah! could he get over how safe he might fare;
At length he resolved to try;
At worst 'twas but drowning, and what was a life
Compared to confinement in sin and in strife,
Beside a trap-door and a scandalous wife?
'Twas nothing—he'd swim, or he'd die.

Ah! he could not swim, and was loath to resign
This life for a world unknown;
For he had been sinning, and misery condign
Would sure be his portion alone.
How sweetly the sun on the green mountain shone;
And the flocks they were resting in peace,
Or bleating along on each parallel path:
The lambs they were skipping on fringe of the heath—
How different might kythe the lone valleys of death,
And cheerfulness evermore cease?

All wistful he stood on the brink of the pool,
And dropt on its surface the tear;
He started at something that boded him dool,
And his mouth fell wide open with fear.
The trample of gallopers fell on his ear;
One look was too much for his eye;
For there was his wife, and her paramours twain,
With whip and with spur coming over the plain;
Bent forward, revengeful, they galloped amain,
They hasten, they quicken, they fly!

Short time was there now to deliberate, I ween.
And shortly did Connel decree;
He shut up his mouth, and he closed his een,
And he pointed his arms like a V,
And like a scared otter, he dived in the Dee,
His heels pointed up to the sky;
Like bolt from the firmament downward he bears;
The still liquid element startled uprears,
It bubbled, and bullered, and roared in his ears,
Like thunder that bellows on high.

He soon found the symptoms of drowning begin,
And painful the feeling be sure,
For his breath it gaed out, and the water gaed in,
With drumble and mudwart impure;
It was most unpleasant, and hard to endure,
And he struggled its inroads to wear;
But it rushed by his mouth, and it rushed by his nose,
His joints grew benumbed, all his fingers and toes.
And his een turned they neither would open nor close,
And he found his departure was near.

One time he came up, like a porpoise, above,
He breathed and he lifted his eye,
It was the last glance of the land of his love,
Of the world, and the beautiful sky:
How bright looked the sun from his window on high,
Through furs of the light golden grain!
Oh, Connel was sad, but he thought with a sigh,
That far above you peaceful vales of the sky,
In bowers of the morning he shortly might lie,
Though very unlike it just then.

He sunk to the bottom, no more he arose,
The waters for ever his body inclose;
The horse-mussel clasped on his fingers and toes,
All passive he suffered the scathe.
But oh, there was one thing his heart could not brook,
Even in his last struggles his spirit it shook;
The eels, with their cursed equivocal look,
Redoubled the horrors of death.

Oh, aye since the time that he was but a bairn,
When catching his trouts in the Cluny or Gairn,
At sight of an eel he would shudder and darn!
It almost deprived him of breath.

He died, but he found that he never would be
So dead to all feeling and smart,
No, not though his flesh were consumed in the Dee,
But that eels would some horror impart.
With all other fishes he yielded to mart,
Resistance became not the dead;
The minnow, with gushet sae gowden and braw,
The siller-ribbed perch, and the indolent craw,
And the ravenous ged, with his teeth like a saw,
Came all on poor Connel to feed.

They rave and they rugged, he cared not a speal,
Though they preyed on his vitals alone:
But, Lord! when he felt the cold nose of an eel,
A quaking seized every bone;
Their slid slimy forms lay his bosom upon,
His mouth that was ope, they came near;
They guddled his loins, and they bored thro' his side,
They warped all his bowels about on the tide.
* * * * * * * *

Young Connel was missed, and his mother was sad,
But his sisters consoled her mind;
And said, he was wooing some favourite maid,
For Connel was amorous and kind.
Ah! little weened they that their Connel reclined
On a couch that was loathful to see!
'Twas mud—and the water-bells o'er him did heave;
The lampreys passed through him without law or leave,
And windowed his frame like a riddle or sieve,
Afar in the deeps of the Dee!

It was but a night, and a midsummer night,
And next morning when rose the red sun,
His sisters in haste their fair bodies bedight,
And, ere the day's work was begun,
They sought for their Connel, for they were undone
If aught should their brother befall:
And first they went straight to the bower in the deane,
For there he of late had been frequently seen;
For nature he loved, and her evening scene
To him was the dearest of all.

And when within view of his bourack they came,
It lay in the skaddow so still,
They lift up their voices and called his name,
And their forms they shone white on the hill:
When, trow you, that hallo so erlisch and shrill
Arose from those maids on the heath?
It was just as poor Connel most poignant did feel,
As reptiles he loved not of him made a meal,
Just when the misleered and unmannerly eel
Waked him from the slumbers of death.

He opened his eyes, and with wonder beheld
The sky and the hills once again;
But still he was haunted, for over the field
Two females came running amain.
No form but his spouse's remained on his brain:
His sisters to see him were glad;
But he started bolt upright in horror and fear,
He deemed that his wife and her minions were near.
He flung off his plaid, and he fled like a deer,
And they thought their poor brother was mad.

He 'scaped; but he halted on top of the rock;
And his wonder and pleasure still grew:
For his clothes were not wet, and his skin was unbroke,
But he scarce could believe it was true
That no eels were within; and too strictly he knew
He was married and buckled for life.
It could not be a dream; for he slept and awoke:
Was drunken, and sober; had sung, and had spoke;
For months and for days he had dragged in the yoke
With an unconscientious wife.

However it was, he was sure he was there,
On his own native cliffs of the Dee:
Oh never before looked a morning so fair,
Or the sun-beam so sweet on the lea!
The song of the merl from her old hawthorn tree,
And the blackbird's melodious lay,
All sounded to him like an anthem of love;
A song that the spirit of nature did move;
A kind little hymn to their Maker above,
Who gave them the beauties of day.

So deep the impression was stamped on his brain;
The image was never defaced;
Whene'er he saw riders that galloped amain,
He darned in some bush till they passed.
At kirk or at market sharp glances he cast,
Lest haply his wife might be there;
And once, when the liquor had kindled his e'e,
It never was known who or what he did see,
But he made a miraculous flight from Dundee,
The moment he entered the fair.

But never again was his bosom estranged
From his simple and primitive fare;
No longer his wishes or appetite ranged
With the gay and voluptuous to share.
He viewed every luxury of life as a snare:
He drank of his pure mountain spring;
He watched all the flowers of the wild as they sprung;
He blest his sweet laverock, like fairy that sung,
Aloft on the hem of the morning cloud hung,
Light fanning its down with her wing.

And oft on the shelve of the rock he reclined,
Light carolling humorsome rhyme,
Of his midsummer dream, of his feelings refined,
Or some song of the good olden time.
And even in age was his spirit in prime,
Still reverenced on Dee is his name;
His wishes were few, his enjoyments were rife,
He loved and he cherished each thing that had life,
With two small exceptions, an eel and a wife,
Whose commerce he dreaded the same.

A Greek Pastoral.

Where proud Olympus rears his head
As white as the pall of the sheeted dead,
And mingling with the clouds that sail
On heaven's pure bosom, softly pale,
Till men believe that the hoary cloud
Is part of the mountain's mighty shroud,
While far below, in lovely guise,
The enchanted vale of Tempe lies,
There sat a virgin of peerless fame—
Thessalia's sweetest, comeliest dame,—
Gazing upon the silver stream,
As if in a rapt Elysian dream.
Far, far below her glowing eye,
Standing on an inverted sky,
Where clouds and mountains seem'd to swingle,
And Ossa with Olympus mingle,
She saw a youth of manly hue,
In robes of green and azure blue,
Of grape, of orange, and of rose,
And every dye the rainbow knows;
The nodding plumes his temples graced,
His sword was girded to his waist:
And much that maiden's wonder grew,
At a vision so comely and so new;
And, in her simplicity of heart,
She ween'd it all the enchanter's art.

As straining her eyes adown the steep,
At this loved phantom of the deep,
She conjured him to ascend, and bless
With look of love his shepherdess.
And when she beheld him mount the tide,
With eagle eye and stately stride,
She spread her arms and her bavaroy,
And scream'd with terror and with joy.

The comely shade, approaching still
To the surface of the silent rill,
Beckon'd the maid with courteous grace,
And look'd her fondly in the face,
Till even that look she could not bear,
It was so witching and so dear.
She turn'd her eyes back from the flood,
And there a Scottish warrior stood,
Of noble rank and noble mien,
And glittering in his tartans sheen.

She neither fainted, scream'd, nor fled,
But there she sat astonished;
Her eyes o'er his form and feature ran—
She turn'd to the shadow, then the man;
Till at last she fix'd a look serene
Upon the stranger's manly mien.
Her ruby lips fell wide apart;
High beat her young and guileless heart,
Which of itself reveal'd the tale,
By the quiverings of its snowy veil,—
A living statue feminine,
A model cast in mould divine;
There she reclined, enchanted so,
She moved not finger, eye, nor toe,
From fear one motion might dispel
The great enchanter's thrilling spell.

"'Tis all enchantment! Such a grace
Ne'er ray'd a human virgin's face:
'Tis all enchantment—rock and river—
May the illusion last for ever!"
Exclaim'd the youth—"O maiden dear,
Are such enchantments frequent here?"

"Yes, very!" said this mould of love;
But hand or eye she did not move,
But whispering said,
As if afraid
Her breath would melt the comely shade;
"Yes, very! This enchanted stream
Has visions raised in maiden's dream,
Of lovers' joys, and bowers of bliss,
But never aught so sweet as this.
Oh, pass not like fleeting cloud away!
Last, dear illusion,—last for aye!
And tell me, if on earth there dwell
Men suiting woman's love so well."

YOUTH.

"I came from the isle of the evening sun,
Where the solans roost, and the wild deer run;
Where the giant oaks have a gnarl'd form,
And the hills are coped with the cloud and the storm;
Where the hoar-frost gleams on the valleys and brakes,
And a ceiling of crystal roofs the lakes:
And there are warriors in that land,
With helm on head and sword in hand;
And tens of thousands roving free,
All robed and fair as him you see.
I took the field to lead my own
Forward to glory and renown;
I learn'd to give the warrior word,
I learn'd to sway the warrior's sword,
Till a strange enchantment on me fell—
How I came here I cannot tell.

"There came to the field an old gray man,
With a silver beard and a visage wan;
And out of the lists he beckon'd me,
And began with a tale of mystery,
Which soon, despite of all control,
Took captive my surrender'd soul.
With a powerful sway,
It roll'd away,
Till evening dropp'd her curtain gray,
And the bittern's cry
Was heard on high,
And the lamps of glory begemm'd the sky;
Yet still the amazing tale proceeded,
And still I follow'd, and still I heeded,—
For darkness or light,
The day or the night,

The last or the first,
Or hunger or thirst,
To me no motive could impart—
It was only the tale that charm'd my heart.

"We posted on till the morning sun,
And still the tale was never done;
Faster and faster the old man went,
Faster and faster I ran, intent
That tale of mystery out to hear,
Till the ocean's roll-call met my ear;
For the forest was past, and the shore was won,
And still the tale was never done.

"He took to a boat, but said no word;
I follow'd him in of my own accord,
And spread the canvas to the wind,
For I had no power to stay behind:
We sail'd away, and we sail'd away,
I cannot tell how many a day;—
But the winsome moon did wax and wane,
And the stars dropp'd blood on the azure main,
And still my soul with burning zeal
Lived on the magic of that tale,
Till we came to this enchanted river,
When the old gray man was gone for ever.
He faded like vapour before the sun,
And in a moment the tale was done.
And here am I left,
Of all bereft,
Except this zone of heavenly weft,
With the flowers of Paradise inwove,
The soft and silken bands of love.
Art thou the angel of this glade—
A peri, or a mortal maid?"

MAIDEN.

"It is all enchantment! Once on a time
I dwelt in a distant eastern clime—
Oh, many a thousand miles away,
Where our day is night, and our night is day;
Where beauty of woman is no bliss,
And the Tigris flows, a stream like this.
I was a poor and fatherless child,
And my dwelling was in the woodland wild,
Where the elves waylaid me out and in;
And my mother knew them by their din,
And charm'd them away from our little cot—
For her eyes could see them, but mine could not.

"One summer night, which I never can rue,
I dream'd a dream that turn'd out true:
I thought I stray'd on enchanted ground,
Where all was beauty round and round;
The copse and the flowers were full in bloom,
And the breeze was laden with rich perfume.
There I saw two golden butterflies,
That shone like the sun in a thousand dyes;
And the eyes on their wings that glow'd amain,
Were like the eyes on the peacock's train.
I did my best
To steal on their rest,
As they hung on the cowslip's damask breast:
But my aim they knew,
And shier they grew,
And away from flower to flower they flew.
I ran—I bounded as on wings,
For my heart was set on the lovely things:
And I call'd, and conjured them to stay,
But they led me on, away, away!
Till they brought me to enchanted ground,
When a drowsiness my senses bound;
And when I sat me down to rest,
They came and they flutter'd round my breast;
And when I laid me down to sleep,
They lull'd me into a slumber deep;
And I heard them singing, my breast above,
A strain that seem'd a strain of love:—
It was sung in a shrill and soothing tone,
By many voices join'd in one.

Cradle Song of the Elves.

Hush thee, rest thee, harmless dove!
Child of pathos, and child of love,
Thy father is laid
In his cold deathbed,
Where waters encircle the lowly dead;
But his rest is sweet
In his winding sheet,
And his spirit lies at his Saviour's feet.
Then hush thee, rest thee, child of bliss!
Thou flower of the eastern wilderness!
Thy mother has waked in her cot of the wild,
And has wail'd for the loss of her only child;
But the prayer is said,
And the tear is shed,
And her trust in her God unaltered;
But oh! if she knew
Of thy guardians true,
And the scenes of bliss that await for you,
She would hymn her joys to the throne above—
Hush thee, rest thee, child of love!
Hush thee, rest thee, fatherless one!
Joy is before thee, and joy alone;
There is not a fay that haunts the wild,
That has power to hurt the orphan child:
For the angels of light,
In glory bedight,
Are hovering around by day and by night—
A charge being given
To spirits of Heaven,
That the elves of malice afar be driven.
Then, hush thee, rest thee, lovely creature!
Till a change is wrought in thy mortal nature.

"When I awoke from this dreamless slumber,
There were beings around me without number:
They had human faces, of heaven beaming,
And wings upon their shoulders streaming;
Their eyes had a soft, unearthly flame,
And their lovely locks were all the same;

Their voices like those of children young,
And their language was not said, but sung;
I ween'd myself in the home above,
Among beings of happiness and love.

"Then they laid me down so lightsome and boon,
In a veil that was like a beam of the moon,
Or a ray of the morning passing fair,
And wove in the loom of the gossamer;
And they bore me aloft, over tower and tree,
And over the land, and over the sea:
There were seven times seven on either side,
And their dazzling robes stream'd far and wide.
It was such a sight as man ne'er saw;
Which pencil of heaven alone could draw,
If dipp'd in the morning's glorious dye,
Or the gorgeous tints of the evening sky,
Or in the bright celestial river,
The fountain of light, that wells for ever.

"But whither they bore me, and what befell,
For the soul that's within me I dare not tell;
No language could make you to conceive it,
And if you did, you would not believe it:
But after a thousand visions past,
This is my resting place at last.
These flocks and fields they gave to me,
And they crown'd me the Queen of Thessaly.
And, since that time, I must confess
I've no experience had of less
Than perfectest, purest happiness:
And now I tremble lest love's soft spell
Should break the peace I love so well."

YOUTH.

"No! love is the source of all that's sweet,
And only for happy beings meet—
The bond of creation since time began,
That brought the grace of heaven to man.
Let us bathe in its bliss without control,
And love with all the heart and soul;
For mine are with thee, and only thee,
Thou Queen of the maidens of Thessaly!"

MAIDEN.

"If thou couldst love as a virgin can,
And not as sordid selfish man;
If thy love for me
From taint were as free
As the evening breeze from the Salon sea,
Or the odours hale
Of the morning gale,
Breathed over the flowers of Tempe's vale;
And no endearment or embrace,
That would raise a blush on a virgin's face,
Or a saint's below, or a spirit's above—
Then I could love!—Oh, as I could love!"

YOUTH.

"Thou art too gentle, pure, and good,
For a lover of earthly flesh and blood;
But I will love thee and cherish thee so,
As a maiden was never loved here below;
With a heavenly aim,
And a holy flame,
And an endearment that wants a name.
I will lead thee where the breeze is lightest,
And where the fountain wells the brightest,
Where the nightingale laments the oftest,
And where the buds of flowers are softest:
There in the glade,
My lovely maid.
I will fold within this rainbow plaid.
I will press her to my faithful breast,
And watch her calm and peaceful rest;
And o'er each aspiration dear,
I will breathe a prayer to Mercy's ear;
And no embrace or kiss shall be,
That a saint in heaven will blush to see."

Then the maiden sank on his manly breast,
As the tabernacle of her rest;
And as there, with closed eyes, she lay,
She almost sigh'd her soul away,
As she gave her hand to the stranger guest,
The comely youth of the stormy west.

Thus ends my yearly offering bland,
The Laureate's Lay of the Fairy Land.

The Russiadde:

A FRAGMENT OF AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM, SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY GILBERT HUME, A SUTOR OF SELKIRK.

BOOK FIRST.

A song of sooth and sober sadness,
Of matchless might and motley madness,
Long as the reach of morning lingle,
And brisk as blaze of evening ingle,
Begin, my Borough Muse, and sing;—
And Janet's wheel her boldest string
Shall vibrate to thy swelling note,
Of days, and deeds so long forgot.

In Selkirk, famed in days of yore
For sutors, but for heroes more:
When wont to raise her hundreds duly,
Her sutors then were heroes truly;
And on red Flodden's dreadful day,
When other powerful clans gave way,
And left our king in fatal fray,
The burly sutors firmly stood,
And dyed the field with Southron blood:
Though flanked, and turned, and flanked again,
Still round them rose the walls of slain;
Though galled by darts, by horses trode on,
They bore their standard off from Flodden,

Which still, on that returning day,
We bear aloft in proud array.

My ancient town of hides and rosin!
I'll blow thy foes up by the dozen.
Selkirk! thou earned thy very name,
Rekindling Freedom's sacred flame.
When Europe's chiefs all prostrate lay,
Beneath a haughty PONTIFF'S sway,
Thou mock'd the mighty, blind allianee,
And Christendom set at defianee;
Dared on his flagrant bulls to trample,
Before king John set the example;
And ere his anathemas ceased,
Sold thy d—d kirk and hanged the priest.

Selkirk, for these exploits so famed,
And hundreds more I have not named,
Shall yet, I hope, in future days,
Raised by her sons' romantic lays,
Above all Scottish towns prevail,
As scene of this heroic tale.

Well then;—as all old tales began,
"In Selkirk once there lived a man;"
But such a man! Ah! shall we ever
Behold his like again? No, never!
His name was John; his trade, 'tis true,
Was boots and shoes to shape and sew:
My muse has so much cant about her—
In short, he was a Selkirk sutor.

Genius of Virgil, here inspire me,
That men may read, though not admire me!
Of every method of description,
In verse, or prose, without restriction,
For saying most, and telling least,
Thine is the easiest and the best.

John was a man near six feet high,
Who had a dark and piercing eye;
His hair and beard were black and bushy;
His nose was high, his brows were brushy;
Large were his limbs, his shoulders broad,
Fitted to bear a mighty load.
Of manly make from crown to sole,
Though his work dress was coarse and droll,
Such was the man; view him with fears,
He'll turn even worse than he appears.

Alas, how ill ourselves we know;
So much to mark in outward show!
From which 'tis hard the soul to scan—
'Tis that within which forms the man.

John had six sons of mettle keen,
As ever in Selkirk town were seen.
At every feat of strength, or art,
Requiring steady hand or heart;
At breaking brand with Border foe;
Or aiming shaft from hunter's bow,
To wound the erne or mountain roe;
Or piercing salmon in the stream,
Though darting like the lightning's gleam;
Whoever tried to prove their equal,
Were always baffled in the sequel.
Their bread in honesty they earned,
Their father's trade they all had learned;
Yet sooth to say, they never staid
From muster field or Border raid.

In youth, John had a warrior been,
Had many a bloody battle seen;
Yet though his strength was unabated,
Of deeds of death his soul was sated;
And weary of its murderous noise,
He now delighted most in boys:
He'd play with them at bat or ball,
Or any game they chose to call.
No oath was minced while John was by;
No word spoke angrily or high;
But each strove to outdo the others
In generous acts, as all were brothers:
So high they valued his esteem,
What he approved they all would seem.
His stall was large and seated round,
There every boy a shelter found;
Even dogs that were ill-used at home,
To this abode of peace would come,
And fawn on all with much affection,
Aye sure to meet a kind reception.

On winter evenings cold and bright,
That stall was crowded every night
With those who loved his minstrelsy,
For many a tale and song had he;
And much he loved to see them all
Silent as squires in courtly hall.
And how their ardour rose and fell,
As different tales he chose to tell!
What pleasure glowed in every face,
At Robin Hood or Chevy Chace!
And how it thrilled each stripling's blood,
To hear how Maitland victor stood!

That day their good king James was born,
The boys came all to dine with John.
In four close circles, on the green,
His youthful guests, all neat and clean,
John eyed with pride and high delight;
And in the middle stood upright,
To see that each got ample share
Of homely, healthy, Forest fare.
But none would taste, till John addressing
His Maker, asked on all a blessing.

His night-cap in his coat disposed,
With folded hands and eye-lids closed;
Bent one foot forward from erect.
And attitude of great respect;
With reverend tone, and fervent air,
He thus to God preferred his prayer:—

"O thou who rul'st above the sky,
Yet feed'st the ravens young that cry;
Make grateful us poor worthless sinners,
For this and all our plenteous dinners,

Whilst many better have nor bread,
Nor house nor home to hide their head:
These gifts, so kindly given by thee,
I give to those I love to see.
My God! may every tender breast
With grace and virtue be impressed;
And in whatever state they stand,
May they be honours to our land;
And each fond parent's hope surmised,
In all be fully realized;
Nor ever vice or lucre draw
Them off from thee, their King, and law.
May every nation under heaven
Have grace of thee, and sins forgiven:
And mind old Scotland 'mongst the rest;
And be thy name for ever blessed."

No morning dawned on Ettrick fair,
That John did not begin with prayer;
No evening closed on his abode,
He did not close with thanks to God.
In each man's joy he bore a part,
And each man's sorrow wrung his heart.

Oh, how can language paint the distance,
'Twixt such a life and mere existence!
How many eat, drink, sleep, and then
Just eat and drink to sleep again;
And lose the fragrance of the morn
For qualms, by base intemperance born!

Others employ the immortal mind,
To wrest and vex the human kind;
Foul slander, strife, and litigation,
Are all their aim and meditation;
And nought so well repay their labours,
As losses which affect their neighbours.
And he whom Fortune sore hath crushed,
They joy to humble in the dust;
Nought left in life wherein to trust.
The partial law of substance fleeces,
And these his good name tear to pieces.

Another loves to rob and plunder;
O'er fields of death to guide the thunder;
And still his fev'rish mind is brewing
How to arise on others' ruin.
The nations groan, for pity crying,
The fields are heaped with dead and dying;
No qualm of conscience! no disgust!
For power and rule is all his lust.
But thanks to Him who rules on high,
And lightens nature with his eye,
That few such monsters, very few
On earth these ravages renew.
Two such within an age are sure
As much as mankind can endure,
And God in mercy oft sends fewer.

But when stern death, with look determined,
Approaches grim—the mind, in ferment,
Views worlds beyond the grave aghast,
And fearful glancing o'er the past,
No action to insure the future—
Who would not then be John the Sutor!
And with him rather take their chance,
Than with the Pope or King of France!

"But, Muse, you promised me a story:
Leave off your prosing, I implore ye;
Page after page I here have wrote,
And all the length that I have got
Is just no more, nor further than,
In Selkirk once there lived a man:
If thus you wind and wind about her,
I'll ne'er get on with John the Sutor."

Well, well, my master, I obey thee:
Where left I off my story, pray thee!
But 'tis so good and so sublime,
I'll tell it o'er a second time.

I said, as all old tales began,
In Selkirk once there lived a man;
Mentioned his name, and recreations,
His sons, their might, and occupations.
I hate description's meagre art,
And love a tale with all my heart;
And this that I am going to tell,
John said (and I believe it well)
Was strictly true. But who can doubt o't?
It bears 't upon the very snout o't,
And proved to Selkirk boys a feast
Full twenty times a-year at least.

Once on a day, in Mercia's bound,
There lived a man for might renowned,
His name was Russell; but in sport,
Or else because the name was short,
Men called him Russ: no doubt, his name
You oft have heard, and wondrous fame.
So great his strength that, in this age,
The truth no credit will engage.
The pine that on the mountain grew,
With ease up from its hold he drew:
Huge rocks, which mortals ne'er had shoved,
Nor ever thought to be removed,
From Eildon's proud vermilioned brow,
He dashed upon the plain below.
Once by a furious bull o'erthrown,
Quite unawares, and all alone—
A bull, for strength of horn and hide,
Unequalled on the Border side—
Russ rose, renewed the rough attack,
And tossed him fairly on his back!
Carved with his sword ('tis truth I tell ye)
Saint Andrew's cross on his broad belly:
He rolled, he bellowed, torn with pain,
Then groaned to death upon the plain.
If this is not heroic writing,
I give the palm up for inditing.

In small affray, stout men a score
Would sink, or fly his fist before;
But in a regular field of blood,
Unarmed, impatient, still he stood:
He never missed, at the first blow,
To break his sword or cleave his foe.

One day, Laird Coom beheld him stand
Amid the ranks with hilt in hand;
And brought him mighty goad of steel,
Meant for a belt to waggon wheel,
Which Russell quickly heaved on high,
While pleasure lightened in his eye.
Woe to the man was nigh that day!
He mowed the Southrons down like hay;
Nor once perceived that, as he drew
Each stroke, as many Scots he slew.
The English saw, and stooping low,
Evited oft the dreadful blow,
Which coming round withouten stay,
Aye swept whole ranks of Scots away.
Laird Coom came up, and d—n'd and swore,
"Hold, Russ; for love of Christ give o'er;
Your club is dyed with kinsmen's blood,
You do ten times more ill than good."

But Russ, this great and wondrous man,
A hero was more ways than one:
Perhaps no mortal e'er so far
Excelled in that called Venus' war.
Through all the country flew his fame,
Myriads of fair he overcame;
And then for children (precious things)
He beat the Turks or Persian kings!

It happened ill, it happened worse,
(Men's joys too often earn a curse!)
Two lovely sisters fell to crying—
Their parents thought the girls were dying:
Sent for the bishop, then beside them
Sung psalms, and prayed for grace to guide them.
For sooth, the bishop said, 'twas hard
If two such flowers should not be spared
To bloom awhile in youthful beauty,
And patterns prove of filial duty;
That so much love and harmless frolic
Should be cut off by windy cholic!
Two doctors then in haste are sent for,
Who came well furnished at a venture,
And eased the maids with little bustle;
But ah! the blame fell sore on Russell.
For the goodman, in one short hour,
Instead of twain, as heretofore,
Of daughter, grandchild, brother, cousin,
Could now count o'er the round half dozen.

The church, the law, are up in arms;
Fear for his champion Coom alarms:
"By heavens," said he, "my noble fellow,
You must escape, ere they compel you
Before their court to stand your trial,
And drink of death the bitterest vial:
If once you come within their power,
Not distant is your dying hour."
Coom loved the man, plain be it spoken,
He was a shield not easily broken;
And Lady Coom, that lovely creature,
The sweetest work of wayward nature,
Would rather all her lands and rents,
Her turrets, domes, and battlements,
And her old laird in death were dubbed,
Before her favourite Russ was snubbed.
This must be noted to be plain,
A laird's wife was called lady then.

This champion, this most wondrous youth,
Had foresight of right stunted growth,
So short, that, as the proverb goes,
He scarcely saw before his nose.
The lady gave her favourite horse;
A sword, a lance, and heavy purse;
And bade him ride, nor make a stand,
Till in the midst of Cumberland;
And she would soon, for his mischance,
Remission gain from Rome or France.

Away rode Russ, for England bound,
Swift as in chase of hawk or hound;
Dash went the steed through mire and ford,
Without or spur or cheering word,
For he was proven of mettle keen,
And oft had in the foray been.
Three miles, at least, thus Russell flew,
When rose a humble cot in view,
Where dwelt a damsel, fair and gay
As e'er was meadow-flower in May.
Russ knew her well, she was so good,
So gentle, and so kind of mood,
He could not pass, but lighted down—
His haste was o'er, his fear was flown.
Fear, said I? that ne'er reached his heart,
Except for thirst or hunger's smart.

Russ spent the day, and eke the night,
In raptures of supreme delight.
Unhappy man! his passions fooled him;
The impulse of the moment ruled him;
There sat he, trifling, toying, laughing,
The blood-red wine in torrents quaffing,
Till next day's sun the hills illumines,
All thoughtless of the church's summons.

The country heard, the country ran,
Resolved to catch the sinful man,
And his huge bulk to jelly boil
In caldron of offensive oil.
Russell's brave courser neighed in stall;
His sword and lance were hung in hall,
If hall it could be called, where smoke
Brooded condense o'er hearth of rock:
One only room the house contained,
Where Russell and his flower remained.

His courser first the mob secured,
And next his lance and trusty sword;

Then rushed they in, while fierce before
Gleamed halbert, pitchfork, and claymore·
And loud they raised the dreadful cry,
"Yield, yield thee, sinner; yield or die!"

Bold Russ sprung up, the table held
Before him as a general shield,
And swore by man's congenial mother,
He'd neither do the one nor the other.

The damsel screamed—that note of fear
Acted as charm on Russell's ear;
For who would not his best blood spend
To please the fair, and them defend?
That note of fear was watch-word good,
And cost a few their precious blood.
Like tiger o'er his tender young,
Russ on the crowd in fury sprung;
Swords, lances, pitchforks, men and all,
Bore with his table 'gainst the wall,
Their bodies squeezed as thin as paper,
And laughed to see them grin and caper;
While squirting blood so fiercely played,
That holes were in the ceiling made.—
Now, gallant Muse, I think thou'lt show 'em
Thou can'st indite heroic poem.

Priest, monk, and peasant, next advance guard,
And every vent with sword and lance guard,
And then, at once to end their fears,
They fired the house about his ears.
Russ coughed, and sneezed, and rubbed his eyes.
As clouds of smoke began to rise,
"What! shall I like a dolt," said he,
"Be smoked to death like silly bee?
Nor once my utmost vigour prove,
To save myself, and save my love?
Come, follow me; I'll clear a path,
Or like a hero yield my breath."

The bolts and bars like reeds he tore,
The door from off its hinges bore,
And like the cloud-struck ocean wave,
That hurls the tar to watery grave;
So on the crowd our hero bore,
While cowl and mitre sunk before.

But though the door was breast-plate strong,
And crushed at first the opposing throng;
Although a shield of sure defence,
It would not wield to any sense,
But flapped as slowly to the ground
As arm of windmill in its round.
The door away in rage he threw,
And looked around for weapon true;
For sword or lance he did not hover,
He knew, one stroke and these were over.

But time was precious, for the train
Were rallying to the strife amain;
What weapon Russ chose in his haste,
No human foresight will suggest,
Nor mind approve—withouten jest
It was a lean and sordid priest,
That chanced among his feet to lie,
Not dead, but in extremity.

Him by the heels he roughly drew,
And soon in air his reverence flew
With rapid whirl, and broken howls,
Pouring destruction on their souls;
All those on whom the strokes alighted
Sunk calmly down, in death benighted.
Of every mace, or sword, in field red,
That Russell e'er before had wielded,
None ever wrought such dreadful doom
As did this limb of papal Rome.
The monks and peasants mixed were lying,
The field was strewed with dead and dying;
The rest from ravage so uncivil
Fled, swearing Russell was the devil.

Our hero gazed all thoughtful—drew
One hand across his dripping brow:
The other still above his breast,
Held by the heel the mangled priest;
In case of more malignant foes,
That weapon he wished not to lose.

The news spread o'er the Merse like fire;
The people all were roused to ire,
And flocked in crowds from east and west,
Our hero quite to circumvest;
And either bind his hands and feet,
Or pierce him through with arrows fleet.

Still stood bold Russell, all alone;
His steed and armour both were gone:
He tried to reason, but his thought
In vain was called, in vain was sought;
'Twas gone!—evanished in the blast
Of toils and pleasures newly past.
Nought could he settle, nothing frame,
Save travelling back the way he came.

Short then had been his span of life,
For thousands hastened to the strife,
Had not dame Venus, from the sky,
Beheld him with a pitying eye;
And hasted, on celestial wing,
Her favourite hero off to bring.

Russ saw, descending full in view,
Something like swan or white sea-mew,
Swift as the eagle of the main,
Or red bolt reeling through the rain,
Which lighting on the level nigh,
Russ chanced to turn a curious eye.

But how surprised was he, to see
A nymph come smiling o'er the lea;
Straight as the stateliest pine that grows,
And fresh as bosom of the rose;
Taper and round was every limb,
Her waist was short—not over slim:
The veil, o'er her fair bosom thrown,
Though muslin of the sky, seemed brown.

Never did air become so well,
Never did form so sweetly swell.
Her sweet ripe lips of rosy hue,
Her speaking eye so soft and blue;
Her locks light waving as she run,
Like yellow clouds before the sun;
Her blushes sly, that went and came,
Set Russell's gallant heart on flame.
"Brave youth," she said, "cheer up thy heart;
I cannot bear with thee to part;
For me and mine thou hast done more
Than ever Scotsman did before.
Say, wilt thou leave this field of blood,
And go with me for ill or good?"

Russell looked sly, with sheepish grin,
His heart-strings thrilled his breast within!
"Yes, madam, yes; be 't ill or well,
By Heaven, I'll follow thee to hell!"

"Then come along," she quick replied,
"Your foes approach on every side;
Come on my back without delay,
I'll bear thee from their rage away."

"What! on your back?—indeed! indeed!
Madam, you'll make but sober speed.
Come on your back!—use you so ill!
No, curse me, madam, if I will."

"Thou art my champion," she replied,
"And whether well or woe betide,
Thou'st given thy word, thou'st given thy oath,
And Russell thou shalt keep them both:
Yes; soon shalt thou of wonders tell,
Seen in the farthest nook of hell.
Come, haste thee; see, thy foes are near;
An hundred shafts are pointed here,
All waiting but the twang of string,
In thy brave blood to wet the wing.
Thou art my hope, my only care;
I'll bear thee through the yielding air,
Through bowels of the earth and sea,
And every danger shield from thee.
The rainbow's lovely arch we'll climb;
Sail on yon saffron cloud sublime;
Then souse, our panting breasts to lave,
In ocean's green and shelvy wave,
Till in Breadalbane's deepest dell,
Where this green world is but a shell,
An easy passage there I know
Down to the dismal shades below.
Come, haste, we have no time to stay,
I'll bear thee from this mob away."

Russell's dull reason found her household
Of crude ideas all bamboozled:
Of all that speech, from end to end,
One word he could not comprehend;
But stood with head on shoulder leaning,
As striving to conceive her meaning.

Then by the wrists she griped him fast,
And lightly o'er her shoulders cast;
Clasped his huge fists around her bosom;
Bade him hold fast lest she should lose him:
Then, swift as heron or curlew,
Began to scale the ether blue.
No other hold beneath the sky
Could have induced bold Russ to fly:
He was so high too ere he knew,
That, though he soon began to rue,
For fear of rocks and rails below,
He durst not for his soul let go.

They entered soon a thunder cloud,
When Russell shrunk, and sighed as loud
As if the dame had popped him in
An icy river to the chin;
And held a gripe like grisly death,
Till Venus almost lost her breath.

The sights that there our hero saw,
Were far surpassing reason's law;
He saw the royals of the sky
Play off their dread artillery:
A thousand warriors, tall and grim,
Plied in the cloud so dark and dim;
Loading their guns of monstrous frame,
With bowls of elemental flame.
A spectre colonel, tall and gray,
Bawled out the order, "fire away!"
Crash went the bolts, in thunder borne;—
The bosom of the cloud was torn,
The earth was bored, the rocks were riven,
And scarcely 'scaped the halls of heaven;
The rude concussion broke so high,
It jingled the windows of the sky.
Russ every moment was in dread
The burning bolts would singe his head:
Or that the tubes would interpose,
And break his forehead or his nose;
But rolling sulphur, hail, and flame,
All oped before the lovely dame.—
Well done, my Muse! by that same rule,
Virgil's a prosing drivelling fool.

Far up the welkin now they wind,
And leave the speckled world behind.
Russ never saw a scene so fair
As Scotland from the ambient air.
O'er valleys clouds of vapour rolled,
While others beamed in burning gold;
And stretching far and wide between,
Were fading shades of fairy green.
The glassy sea that round her quakes,
Her thousand isles and thousand lakes,
Her mountains frowning o'er the main,
Her waving fields of golden grain—
On such a scene, so sweet, so mild,
The radiant sunbeam never smiled.
Let him who dares my lay asperse,
Try match a Selkirk sutor's verse.

As up the firmament he flew,
Still less and less the island grew;

At length, as on a map unfurled,
He looked on half the glowing world,
Where oceans rolled and rivers ran,
To bound the aims of sinful man.

Russ looked above, he looked below,
But one from the other could not know;
Knew neither east, west, up nor down,
Which was the earth, or which the moon;
Each seemed the same, in each degree,
And each seemed high and low as he:
His senses all began to vary,
He felt a strange and bad quandary.

"Bless me," said Russ, "where are we now?
Madam, why all this great ado?
If for Breadalbane's bounds thou bearest,
Thou'rt going round to seek the nearest;
Besides, the air's become so rarefied,
For breath my bosom must be scarified.
Keep from the moon, I humbly pray,
Else there I shall be forced to stay;
The attraction's strong, and I'm so heavy,
That doubtless you'll be forced to leave me.

Dame Venus laughed, yet was afraid
It might prove just as Russ had said;
And round her atmosphere so blue
Took of the moon a distant view.
Russ saw his sinful countryman
Beneath his burden groaning wan,
Who to the moon was whipped up one day,
For stealing sticks upon a Sunday.
He saw, besides, an iron gate,
At which a hungry colt did wait;
Over the spikes his nose was lying,
And Russell thought he whiles was neighing.
The new moon glowed in all her charms,
Yet clasped the old moon in her arms,
Much like himself and lovely dame:
All this he saw, then off they came.

He was so near the ample sky,
Its plain he fairly could espy:
Whether 'twas made of crystal blue,
Or bottle-glass, he scarcely knew;
But 'twas the one, and he could prove it:
The stars were lamps that burnt above it;
The sun a fire that flamed amain,
On which the coals were showered like rain.
And when the damps rose from below,
A haze upon this glass would grow,
Till little seraphs scrubbed it clean,
Then fire and lamps again were seen.
On polar swivel it kept its twirl,
And swept around with rapid whirl:
Thus sun and stars about were borne—
That these were facts Russ could have sworn.

They reached this nether world again,
Just in the middle of the main:
Sweet Venus' bosom beat so high
With her huge burden through the sky,
She hovered low, her limbs to lave
Slight on the bow of emerald wave;
Each billow tipt, her breast to cool,
Like swallow on the evening pool,
While trembling sailors shunned the track
Of dolphin on the mermaid's back.

Some roguish tricks she next began,
Floating on wave like buoyant swan,
Light o'er the billows heaved on high,
Then sunk between from human eye.
Russ capered sore with phiz uncouth;
He shut his eyes, he shut his mouth,
Expecting, every wave that broke,
With brine his bellows-pipe would choke.

Sly Venus laughed, then dived below,
The wonders of her power to show:
Russ from the lady durst not sever,
But thought he then was gone for ever.
Then first his heart perceived alarms
For the effects of female charms.

No, Russell, no—the lovely creatures
Have nought malicious in their natures.
If woman's gentle heart you gain,
True to the last she will remain;
Nor danger, poverty, nor pride,
Nought, nought will drive her from thy side:
Though *fickle's* buckled to her name,
Our sex for ever are to blame.

Soon on the channels of the tide
Sat Russell and his lovely guide;
He felt as light, and breathed as pure,
As in the glens of Lammermuir.
But here my Muse her breath must draw,
Before she sing what Russell saw.

Mora Campbell.

When that dire year had come and gone,
That laid the pride of Caledon
At one infuriate venture, low,
Beneath the foot of cruel foe—
That cursed year, whose memory brands
With burning flame her northern lands,
And deep on mountain, fell, and flood,
Is graved in characters of blood—
It was when last was heard the jar,
The tempest, and the clang of war
Within our isle; when April's sun
Saw red Culloden lost and won,
And the bold lineage of the Gael
Trodden like dust o'er moor and dale;—
When the bright star of Stuart's race
Was dashed from its resplendent place,
That ruddy star which through the spheres
Had shone sublime a thousand years,
That rose through blood in times of yore,
A light ensanguined always bore,
Then set in blood for evermore;

'Twas then and there, where England's bands
Lay mid Lochaber's ruined lands,
And held loud revels of delight,
Feasting and dancing day and night,
With every freak, and whim, and game,
That conqu'rors in despite could frame;
The chiefs of Diarmid all were there,
Noted for heroes tall and fair,
Of manly mete and noble mein,
All blazing in their tartans sheen;
A name of majesty and power,
Whose might in Scotia's darkest hour,
Had oft been roused and starkly tried,
But always on the strongest side.
For why, they say, with power avail?
'Tis they who always turn the scale;
For where they join their potent name,
The side of power must be with them.

Howe'er that be, or false or true,
A tale of love hath nought to do;
Suffice it, that the Campbells were
The chief great name of Scotland there;
And hence their dames and maidens fair
Came to the camp their joys to share:
And sooth such dancing and deray,
Such galliardise and gambols gay,
Ne'er sounded over shore and vale
On dark Lochaber's dusky gale.

Among the rest there came a maid
From green Glen-Lyon's mountain glade,
Hight Mora Campbell, one whose mien
Excell'd all beauty ever seen
In Scotia's stern and stormy reign,
Where beauty strove to bloom in vain.
But though the maidens of Argyle,
Gathered from continent and isle,
From Mull of Morven to Loch-Orn,
From gray Glenorchy and from Lorn,
Breadalbane's maidens, bronzed and tall,
And the blue eyes of Fortingall;
Yet Mora of Glen-Lyon shone
O'er all unequall'd, and alone,
Like the young moon on summer even,
Walking amid the stars of heaven.

Great was the friendly strife among
The courtly warriors of the throng,
To gain this peerless maiden's hand
At serenade or saraband;
For where a maiden shows her face,
Whate'er her nation or her race,
Man still will love, and still will woo
The best—of thousands—or of two.
Be she a savage, serf, or slave,
Or maiden of the emerald wave;
Nay, be she sable, brown, or fair,
She's loved, if better be not there.

So was it here; the southern host
Were feasted at their foemen's cost,
And there, in reckless riot, lay
Watching the north for many a day:
But, oh, what stir, and joy, and ramp,
When these young maidens sought the camp!
Then all was compliment and cooing,
With toying, teasing, love, and wooing.

But short their stay, a visit sped
More to the living than the dead,
Though some had sighs and tears to feign
Above the graves of kinsmen slain;
And now warm vows of love were cast
On ladies' ears, as thick and fast
As leaves fall from Lochaber trees,
Or snow-flakes from her northern breeze.

Among the rest, an English knight,
Sir Hugh De Vane of Barnard hight,
Made love to Mora in such way
That her young mind was moved to stay,
And take her lot for ill or good
With a young knight of noble blood.
Her brother, too, seemed to approve,
Vouching Sir Hugh's unblemished love,
But urged her not to stay or go,
Or answer him with yes or no.

The sequel scarcely need I tell—
They had no heart to say farewell;
The maid was won, you may foresee,
As all maids are, or wish to be;
For what fair maiden can refuse,
When gallant youthful warrior sues?
Their hands in holy bond were tied;
Sir Hugh was happy with his bride,
As youth could with such beauty be,
And drank of pleasure to the lee;
But ne'er his marriage would confess
To one of all the jocund mess,
Save her own brother, from whose hand
He got the flower of fair Scotland—
A proud and haughty youth was he,
As Highland captain needs must be.

The army's ordered by the crown
To foreign lands, to earn renown,
And all are forced, howe'er inclined,
To leave their Highland loves behind.
Mora prepared at break of day
To follow her dear lord away,
Wherever call'd to face a foe,
Or honour beckon'd him to go;
But by the general was withstood,
And order'd with her sisterhood.
Up came young Campbell of the glen,
Fierce as a lion from his den,
In mood provoking stern reply,
And fierce defiance in his eye:
"My lord," said he, "I may not bear
Such court'sy to my sister dear.
Think'st thou her birth and lineage good,
The best of Albyn's noble blood,

No better than that motley race
Brought by thy kinsmen to disgrace!
I tell thee, lord, unto thy brow,
My sister's higher born than thou;
And more, she is thy nephew's spouse,
By all the holy marriage vows—
Wed with a ring—his lawful wife—
I the maintainer with my life."—
"Hence to thy post, thou saucy Scot,
Thy high descent I question not;
Nay, doubt not that thy sires renown'd
Were mighty kings, revered and crown'd,
O'er some poor glen of shaggy wood,
Before the universal flood;
But this I know, that blood of thine
Commingle never shall with mine,
To taint it with rebellion's ban,
Thy nation's curse since time began.
The charge is false—I know Sir Hugh
Not for his soul this thing durst do,
Without my knowledge and consent;
He would not stoop to circumvent
A beauteous maiden to disgrace—
I'll question him before her face."

Up came Sir Hugh, and took his stand
Hard by his general's trembling hand;
He heard his words, and saw his look,
While Campbell with resentment shook,
And Mora stood as deadly pale
As flowcret in December's gale;
Sooth the young warrior bore a mind
Not to be envied or defined.

"Sir, tell me, on your word, your life,
Is this young dame your wedded wife?"

Sir Hugh grew wan, Sir Hugh grew red,
He tried to speak, but speech had fled;
Three times he tried the truth to own,
And thrice the word he gulped down;
Then with a burst of gather'd breath,
"No," he replied, as if in wrath.—
"Thou liest, thou dog! Darest thou deny
I witness'd with mine ear, mine eye,
Thy interchange of marriage vow?
The ring is on her finger now,
The lines of marriage in her breast:
And this dire wrong must be redress'd
To that dear maid, or, by the rood,
I'll cancel't in thy traitor blood.
For thy soul's worth this truth deny!"—
This Campbell's fierce and proud reply:
But ere the half of it was said,
Mora had sunk to earth as dead;
She heard its import, saw its meed,
And all the woe that would succeed.

Young Campbell, by affection tied,
Was quickly at his sister's side,
And aided by his kinsmen keen,
He bore her lifeless from the green.

Sir Hugh was moved, and struggled hard
'Twixt insult and sincere regard,
And would have follow'd to his harm,
But was withheld by strength of arm.

The Scot to reason did not try,
As deep his wrong his wrath was high.
As for the General, 'twas his will
Always to use the clansmen ill;
He seem'd to view them as a race
Destined for nothing but disgrace,
And therefore tried with all his care
To hound the dog and hold the hare.
The dire event I grieve to tell;
They challenged, fought, and Campbell fell;
And ere poor Mora's beauteous eye
Re-opened on the morning sky;
Ere reason had her throne resumed,
And darken'd intellect return'd,
Her only brother, her sole shield,
Was carried wounded from the field,
With all his tartans crimson-dyed,
And stretch'd down by his sister's side.

This was a trial too severe
For youth and beauty well to bear;
And that same day the English host
March'd off, and hope of love was lost;
And Mora's young elastic mind,
Brisk as Glen-Lyon's balmy wind,
And placid as the evening's fall
On the green bowers of Fortingall,
Was all at once, before its prime,
In misery plunged without a crime.
I know of no such deadly smart
To fall on maiden's bleeding heart.

When the Almighty's sacred sway
Calls our dear bosom friends away,
There is a cause we calm should be—
A reverence due to the decree—
A holy awe that swathes the past
And present, dark and overcast,
Both in a glorious future light,
Eternal, infinite, and bright;
And thus our deepest sorrow given,
Is mingled with a ray of heaven.

But when affection all and whole,
The very pillars of the soul,
Are placed on one sole-being here,
For whom alone this life is dear,
To find *that one* our trust betray,
And all our hopes in ruin lay—
Then 'reaved, astonished, and forsaken,
The structure of the soul is shaken,
Without one prop whereon to rest,
That will not pierce the stooping breast,
Or thought of one beloved so well,
Unshaded by a tinge of hell;
This is a grief without remede—
This, this is wretchedness indeed!

In this dire state of dumb dismay
And hopeless grief, for many a day,
Of every cheering ray bereft,
Was Mora of Glen-Lyon left.
She never waked one morn to cumber,
On which she wish'd not still to slumber;
She never sunk that night to rest,
On which she wish'd not to be blest
With dreamless sleep that break should never,
Unknown, unknowing ought for ever.

In that fond heart where love had reigned,
A vacancy alone remain'd,
A dreary void, which to supply
Nothing remain'd beneath the sky;
For with the husband of her youth,
His sacred honour and his truth,
Vanish'd her hope, her fear, her all.
But yet, at pity's gentle call,
Some kind emotions woke anew;
She to her suffering brother flew,
Yielded to nature's kindred sway,
And nursed and soothed him night and day;
Nor once produced unwelcome theme,
By mention of her husband's name.

Home to Glen-Lyon's lonely glade,
The wounded warrior was convey'd,
And after tedious illness borne,
Dejected, wearied, and outworn,
He yielded up his spirit brave,
And sunk to an untimely grave.
And just before his life's last close,
Glen-Lyon's flower, her faded rose,
Wept o'er a young and helpless guest,
And nursed him on her youthful breast—
A lovely babe; he throve and grew,
Prattled, and smiled, and nothing knew
Of all his mother's yearnings strong,
And all her deep and deadly wrong.

Sir Hugh, with feelings rack'd and torn,
And spirit wounded and forlorn,
At all the ills his hand had wrought,
And conduct with dishonour fraught,
Was hurried by his General far,
To combat in a foreign war,
And hold command in that campaign
That ravaged Alsace and the Rhine.
But from that day he first denied
His youthful wife in warrior pride,
And left her guardian and her shield
A-bleeding on Boleskine field,
From thence in fortune ill or good,
He was a man of altered mood—
A man who only seem'd to take
A thought of life for sorrow's sake;
Fought but to mitigate his woe,
And gloried not in friend or foe.

Three years of fierce and bloody feud
Produced a transient quietude,
And brave Sir Hugh's diminished corps
Returned to England's welcome shore.
Meanwhile his son on Highland brae,
By one more relative's decay,
Succeeded had, by birth allied,
To fair Glen-Lyon far and wide,
To castle, peel, and barbican,
The greatest laird of all his clan.

Why does fair Mora of the wild
Thus deck herself and comely child;
Not in Clan-Campbell's tartans sheen,
The red, the yellow, and the green:
But in new robes of southern hue,
Pale garments of cerulean blue;
And daily take a stand sublime,
Like meteors of a foreign clime!

Ask not again—thou know'st full well,
Nought of this world in which we dwell,
No fault nor failing, time nor space,
Can woman's maiden love efface.
It blossoms, still a virgin gem,
And offspring strengthens still the stem.
Sooner may maiden fresh and fair
Forget her locks of flowing hair,
That, heaving with her balmy breath,
To lover's heart throws shaft of death;
Sooner neglect its crescent bow,
And shed oblique above the brow,
And all her charms aright to set,
Than once an early love forget;
Nay, sooner may maternal love
A truant to her nature prove,
And her betrothed affections flee
The infant smiling on her knee,
Than she can from her heart dethrone
The father of that lovely one.
Even when poor Mora's heart was reft
Of all, still sovereign love was left.

And now she thought—what could she do,
But ween her husband still was true!
And, when in freedom, would not fail
To seek Glen-Lyon's Highland dale,
Where counts would soon have been made even,
And all forgotten and forgiven!

He sent not—came not once that way:
Though many a weary hour and day
She, and the boy of her delight,
Stood robed in southern garments bright,
Straining, with anxious eye intent,
South from the highest battlement,
Then every night she dreamed anew,
Of meeting with her own Sir Hugh;
And every day she took her stand,
And look'd unto the southern land:
While every time she kissed her boy,
A mother's pride, a mother's joy,
Waked ardent longings to attain
Sight of his father once again.

Her heart could brook no more delay,
And southward on a dubious way,
She with her boy disguised is gone—
By land, by sea, they journey'd on,
And soon arrived with purpose shrewd,
Mid London's mingled multitude,
Where straight she went in courtly style,
To Lady Ella of Argyle,[1]
And there did secretly impart
Each wish and purpose of her heart.
That lady welcomed her the more
As all her wrongs she knew before,
And oft had wish'd most fervently,
A mediatrix there to be;
Though, certes, little did she ween
Her friend was beauty's peerless queen.

What scope for matron's subtle aid!
Their potent measures soon were laid;
And forth came Mora of the glen,
Amid a wilderness of men,
All gazing—all entranced outright,
At her resplendent beauty bright:
For no such loveliness or worth
As this fair vision of the North
Had e'er been seen by mortal man,
Or heard of since the world began.
The lady took her friend so fair
To balls, assemblies, everywhere;
And sooth she was a comely sight,
In silken tartans blazing bright:
A comet of bedazzling ray;
A rainbow in a winter day;
A meteor of the frozen zone,
As bright in course as quickly gone.
For purpose justified and plain,
The lady surnamed her M'Vane,
Her husband's name, though unperceived,
Through Scottish breviat interweaved.
Then every day the clamour spread,
Of this unrivalled Highland maid,
And every day brought wooers store,
In splendour to Duke Archibald's door;
But all advances soon were check'd
By distant coldness and respect,
And lords and courtiers sued in vain
To the unparagon'd M'Vane.
Sir Hugh, so dull and saturnine;
Chanced to behold, without design,
In all her elegance unfurl'd,
This streamer of the northern world;
For there were many movements sly,
To bring her to his languid eye,
Which no inducement could invite
To look on lady with delight.

The effect was instant, powerful, strong,
Without the force of right or wrong
To rectify or countervail:
Once more was heaved the loaded scale.
Oh there was something in her air,
So comely, so divinely fair,
So fraught with beauty's genial glow,
Like angel dream'd of long ago,
That all his energies of mind
To this dear object were confined!
He durst not think of former spouse,
Nor dream of former broken vows;
Because, without this lady, he
Found life was utter misery.
Unto Argyle all was unknown;
The lady Ella knew alone;
But he, good man, was to his end,
A Campbell's best and firmest friend:
And judging this a proper fit,
He urged the beauty to submit.
No—she had reasons indirect
A Southern always to suspect;
And unto one should never yield,
Till bonds and contracts, sign'd and seal'd,
Were all made firm in liege and land,
And lodged in good Duke Archibald's hand.
Then lothly did she yield consent
To vows of love so vehement,
And they were wed in princely style,
Within the palace of Argyle.
If brave Sir Hugh loved well before,
This time was added ten times more:
'Twas as if love had raised its head,
In resurrection from the dead;
And fix'd on being all supreme,
Like something in a long-lost dream,
And with an energy intense,
As far surpassing mortal sense,
He loved, as blessed spirits prove,
When meeting in the realms above.

The joy that lighten'd in her eye,
Was watched by his with ecstasy;
On every accent of her tongue
His ravished ear enraptured hung;
And sometimes as its Highland twang
Out through his vitals thrilling rang,
It seem'd to bring a pang of woe,
And tears would all unbidden flow,
As linked in some mysterious way,
With visions of a former day.

But faithless lover never pass'd
Without due chastening at the last;
And grievous penalties in store
Were lurking now Sir Hugh before.
One eve, when rung the dinner bell,
His lady was announced unwell;
And worse—on some mysterious plea,
Firmly refused his face to see.
The warrior was astonished quite;
His senses seem'd involved in night,

[1] This was not the Duchess of Argyle, who had died previously to this adventure; but the Lady Elizabeth Campbell, or Ella, as the duke called her familiarly, who then lived with him.

As if he struggled, conscience-check'd,
Some dire offence to recollect;
But could not all its weight perpend,
Nor its dimensions comprehend.
His spirit shrunk within his frame;
He watch'd the eye of noble dame,
And saw with dreadour and with doubt,
A flame enkindling him about,
That would his heart or honour scar;
But yet he wist not what to fear.
He moved about like troubled sprite,
And rested neither day nor night;
For still his darling, his espoused,
All access to her lord refused.
At length he sought, in rueful style,
The stately Ella of Argyle.

"Madam, by all the holy ties,
Which none knew more than thou to prize;
By those endearments prized the most,
Which thou hast sigh'd for, gain'd and lost,[1]
Tell me my doom. What is my crime?
And why this painful pantomime?
To know the worst will be relief
From this exuberance of grief."

"Sir Hugh, it grieves me much to be
The herald of perplexity,
But letters have arrived of late,
That of injurious matters treat;
This lovely dame, whom you have wed,
Hath our kind guardianship misled;
And is not seemingly the dame,
Either in lineage or in name,
Which she assumed. They hold it true,
That she's a wife and mother too;
That this is truth, I do not know,
But reasons have to dread it so."

Sir Hugh shed some salt tears of grief,
Which brought more anguish than relief,
And thought, as naturally he must,
"I am a sinner! God is just!"
Then blazed he forth with storm and threat,
To blame the lady of deceit.
"Madam," said he, "the lady came
Forth under your auspicious name;
And who could deem deceitful wile,
Used by the house of great Argyle!
I to the duke make my appeal;
From all his princely honest zeal,
I know he'll rid me of this shame,
So derogating to his name.
If she's a wife, I her forego,
To censures fitting thereunto;
And if a mistress, must disclaim
All union with her bloated name;
For though I love her more than life
She ne'er can be my lady wife.

[1] This lady was then the widow of her cousin, the Right Hon. Lord M'Kenzie, of Rosehaugh.

Unto the duke's awards I bow,
I know this deed he'll disallow."

Unto Duke Archibald straight he went,
His grievous injuries to vent;
Who heard him with his known degree
Of calm respect and dignity:
Then said, "I take no blame in ought;
The comely dame my sister brought
Unto my halls, as courtly guest,
And she's incapable of jest.
If this fair dame you have espoused,
Hath our high name, and you, abused,
I give her up without defence,
To suffer for her fraudulence.
Let officers attend, and bear
Her to a jail, till she appear
In court, and this sad blame remove;
I hope her innocence she'll prove."

The officers arrived in haste;
Argyle went to his lovely guest,
To learn if she was not belied;
But no one knew what she replied;
For back he came in sullen mood,
Without remark, evil or good,
And seem'd determined to consign
Mora to punishment condign.
Ere her commitment was made out,
Sir Hugh, in choler and in doubt,
Pleaded to hear from her own mouth,
Whate'er it was, the honest truth;
Then he, impassioned and uproused,
Made rank confusion more confused.
By raging on with stormy din,
Threatening Argyle and all his kin—
When lo! in manifest concern,
The Lady Ella, flush'd and stern,
Came in and with reproving look,
Accosted the astonished duke.

"My lord, your writ you may affere;
'Tis well the officers are here—
For such an injury propense,
Such dark degrading delinquence,
Ne'er proffer'd was by mortal man
To lady of our kin and clan.
Let the offence have judgment due!"
"'Tis my request," replied Sir Hugh.
"Yes, warrior! vengeance shall be had—
And for thy sake, we'll superadd,
As said the prophet to the king,
Thou art the man hath done the thing.
My lord, the criminal malign,
Is this high favourite of thine,
Who hath us proffer'd that disgrace,
Which no effrontery can outface.
False the advice to us was brought—
'Tis he the misery hath wrought.
Unto the lovely dame agrieved,
Whom late he from your hand received.

Poor lady! reft of hope and fame,
And all that was her rightful claim—
My lord, believe it if you can,
This bold Sir Hugh was married man—
Married for seven years before
He came a wooer to your door."

"I'll not believe," Argyle replied,
"That man alive durst have defied
Me to my face in such a way.
Sir, straight this calumny gainsay,
If thou the least respect wouldst claim
To noble warrior's honour'd name."
"All false! all false, my lord, in faith,"
Sir Hugh replied with stifled breath:
"A hoax, a flam your grace to gall;
To prove it I defy them all."

"The proof, Sir Knight, shall soon be brought,
Home to your heart with vengeance fraught.
Your former spouse, from Highland wood,
Is here in blooming lustihood;
And as appropriate garniture,
And a kind welcome to secure,
A sweet young family hath brought,
Wild as young cubs in forest caught—
Whose thews and features are no shams,
Whose carrot locks and kilted hams
The darkest secrets might betray,
Were there no other 'mergent way.
She has call'd here in deep distress—
Our fair friend's anguish you may guess;
From this, what marvel can there be
That she denies your face to see?"

Hast thou not seen the morning ray
Ascend the east with springing day,
Now red, now purple, and now pale,
The herald of the stormy gale?
Thou hast. Yet thou can'st never view
The dead blank look of brave Sir Hugh.
Two wives at once to deprehend him—
And Highland wives—The Lord defend him!

Argyle was wroth, it might be seen,
Yet still preserved his look serene,
He saw the guilty deed confess'd,
By signs which could not be repress'd;
And studied in his lordly mind,
The sharpest punishment assign'd,
When Duncan with broad Highland face,
Came in with bow, and "Please her grace,
Tere pe fine lhady at her gate,
Whose grhief of mhind pe very grheat;
And pretty poy upon her hand,
As was not porn in any land—
Prave Highlander so prave and young,
And spaiks in her own moter tongue;
What shall her nainsel say or dhoo?
She cries to speak with prave Sir Hugh."

Sir Hugh then thought without a doubt
That evils compass'd him about.
"O lord!" he cried, in fervent way,
Then turned in manifest dismay—
"I'll go," said he, "straight to the gate—
I must not let the lady wait."—
"No," cried Argyle, "you 'scape not so.
Guards, keep the door, till once we know
How he himself of this can clear.
Duncan, go bring the lady here."

Duncan bow'd low, and off he ran,
A pliant and right joyful man—
Deeming the lady sure of grace,
When brought before his master's face;
For tartan'd dame from glen or isle,
Ne'er sued in vain to great Argyle.

In came young Mora, blushing deep,
Fresh from Glen-Lyon's lordly steep;
The healthful odours of the wild,
Breathing around her and her child.
Their fragrance came like freshening gale,
For grateful travellers to inhale—
Like kindred roses sweet and bland,
Or wandering wind from fairy land.
The boy was robed like royal fay,
In bold Clan-Gillan's bright array—
Belted and plumed, the elfin smiled,
The phœnix of his native wild;
Herself in the same robes bedight
She wore on her first bridal night,
When he she long had nursed in pain,
Led her unto the darksome fane,
And gave her hand without a stain,
And heart, never to change again,
While torches glimmer'd dimly on
Boleskine's sacred altar-stone.

The astonish'd group stood moveless still,
And neither utter'd good nor ill.
Such beauty, grace, and comely mould,
Said more than language ever told
For her and hers. Ere she'd begun
To speak, some favour she had won—
But some resemblance that she bore,
Some unacknowledged likeness more—
Even great Argyle, of tranquil mien,
And noted for perception keen,
Held no suspicion that the dame,
That comely mother, was the same
Who queen of beauty rank'd the while
In the emporium of our isle.

He was the first that silence broke:
Taking her hand, these words he spoke:
"Fair lady, I have heard a part
Of how much wrong'd and grieved thou art.
What share I had by suit or sway,
I'll rue until my dying day;
But this I promise, that thy right
Shall be as sacred in my sight
As thou of kindred had'st a claim,
And she an alien to our name:

Declare thy grievous wrongs erewhile,
And trust the issue to Argyle."

"My honoured liege, thy handmaid, I,
And of M'Calan's lineage high;
Glen-Lyon's verdant hills I claim,
And Mora Campbell is my name,
His sister, who commission bore
Under Young Campbell of Mamore,
Who led your grace's clansmen bold,
On that dark Culloden's bloody wold.

"That summer when the English host
Lay on Lochaber's ruined coast,
Some dames and maidens of your line
Went to the camp, to intertwine
With laurel every hero's plume
Who fought rebellion to consume.
Too much elated there and then,
This gallant knight, Sir Hugh de Vane,
Made love to me by suit and boon,
And won my youthful heart too soon.
We married were by chaplain vile,
In old Boleskine's holy isle—
My brother present; here's the ring;
The registers, the entering,
As safe and solemn to my mind
As man alive could couple bind.
Sir Hugh dares not the truth deny,
Nor in one point give me the lie.

"But when the order questionless
Came for the host to march express,
His tongue, to truth and honour dead,
Denied me at the army's head;
While the base chaplain stood as glum
As rigid statue, deaf and dumb—
A mere automaton, subjected
To do as general's eye directed.

"My brother charged Sir Hugh in wrath,
Fought him, and met untimely death;
While I, in sorrow and in pain,
Fled to my native hills again;
Where, of young mother all forlorn,
This sweet unfather'd babe was born,
Who now is rightful heir to all
Glen-Lyon's braes and Fortingall.

"But yet, my lord—who would believe't?—
For all the injuries I received,
I found my heart, in woeful plight,
Still clung unto this cruel knight,
With such a fondness, mix'd with pain,
I found I ne'er could love again.
Therefore, in thine and Heaven's sight,
I claim him as my primal right."

"Certes, you may, and him obtain:
Your claim's substantial, fair, and plain;
Your suit you will not—cannot miss.
But then the worst of all is this,
That he'll be hung for felony;
Then what hast thou, or what has she?"

"I think, my lord," Sir Hugh replied,
With haggard air and look aside,
"Since hanging's doom must overtake,
Let it be now for pity's sake.
I've fought in battle-field and glen
The fiercest of the sons of men;
The Mackintoshes, stern and gray,
And the blue Camerons of the brae;
I've braved the Frenchmen's serried might,
At morn, at eve, at dead of night:
But all these battles, fierce and famed,
Compared with this, can ne'er be named;
Mere pigmies to a giant's form,
A zephyr to a raging storm,
A lady's pinpoint to a block,
A chariot's to an earthquake's shock.
Most loved, most lovely, dreaded two!
I never was o'ercome till now,
Nor felt so feverishly. In brief,
A hanging would be great relief:
My lord—'tis truth—(I'll not evade)—
Each word that lovely dame hath said."

"Good lord!" exclaimed the ancient chief,
"This deed unhinges all belief!
What fiend could move thee thus to treat
Our kinswoman, so fair, so sweet;
And then to come with front of brass
To our own house—and, by the mass,
Straight wed—another to destroy,
As if a Campbell were a toy?
What spirit from the dark abyss
Could move thee to such deed as this?"

"God knows, my lord! The thing to me
Is an unfathom'd mystery;
But I suppose it was alone
The devil himself that urged me on;
For I declare, as I've to die,
No man e'er loved so well as I
This lovely dame. But I was bit
And bullied till I lost my wit;
Yet never since that hour of teen
One happy moment have I seen.
I love this last one too, 'tis true;
But, Mora, by my soul I vow,
'Tis for her likeness unto you."

The tears ran down young Mora's cheek;
She turn'd away, but could not speak,
Till Lady Ella of Argyle,
With face uplighted by a smile,
Arose, and took a hand of each,
And said, "Sir Hugh, this shameful breach
Of truth and honour quite o'erpowers
This dame, whose virgin love was yours,
And never will from you depart,
While the warm tide pervades her heart.

But though that heart you sore have wrung,
She cannot bear to see you hung;
And she is right; for, to my mind,
Hanging's no joke, and that you'll find.
And what may this dear boy betide,
Without a father him to guide!
And what disgrace the cant will be,
'Your father hung on Tyburn tree!'
Take both the dames then, as you can,
Speed to Cathay or Hindoostan,
Where you may take a score or two,
And none to say, 'Tis wrong you do."

"Yes, there is one," Dame Mora said,
While tears came streaming to her aid.
But ere another word she spoke,
Old Duncan Glas the silence broke,
With face as grim and as demure,
As winter cloud before the shower—
"Oh plaise her grace, fwat shall she too?
Mattam Te-fane waits here pelow,
Wit salt tears stotting o'er her chin,
And very mat for to pe in."

Wild as a maniac looked De Vane;
Then to the window ran amain,
And threw it open, quite intent
To brain himself, and supervent
This dreadful war of Highland wives,
And both their shameful narratives,
Before the just but proud Argyle,
The greatest subject of our isle;
But both the ladies held him fast,
To take one farewell for the last.
Argyle looked stern in troubled way,
And wist not what to do or say,
Till Lady Ella once again
Address'd the knight in cheerful strain:—

"Cheer up, Sir Hugh; for, on my life,
Your first, your last, your only wife,
Your virgin love, whose heart you won,
And mother of your comely son,
Now takes your hand. The scheme was mine,
And happy be you and your line;
The lovely dames are both the same,
In hers how knew you not your name?
Twice married now—Unequall'd lot!
But law redoubled breaks it not.
I join your hands, too long apart,
And wish you joy with all my heart!"

The crystal tears from his blue eyes
Pour'd bright as dew-drops from the skies;
His manly frame with joy was shivering,
And his round ruby lip was quivering,
As down he kneel'd in guise unmeet,
Embraced and kiss'd the ladies' feet;
Then seized his child in boyhood's bloom,
And danced and caper'd round the room.
But such a night of social glee,
Of wassail, song, and revelry,
Was not that night in Britain's isle,
As in the house of great Argyle.

The Good Man of Allon.

Did you never hear of a queer auld man,
A very strange man was he,
Who dwelt on the bonnie banks of Forth,
In a town full dear to me?

But if all be true, as I heard tell,
And as I shall tell to thee,
There was never such a thing befell
To a man in this countrye.

One day he sat on a lonely brae,
And sorely he made his moan,
For his youthful days had pass'd away,
And ronkilt age came on;

And he thought of the lightsome days of love,
And joyful happy souls,
Quhill the tears ran ower the auld man's cheeks,
And down on his button holes.

"Ochone, ochone!" quod the poor auld man,
"Where shall I go lay mine head?
For I am weary of this world,
And I wish that I were dead;

"That I were dead, and in my grave,
Where cares could not annoy,
And my soul safely in a land
Of riches and of joy.

"Yet would I like ane cozy bed
To meet the stroke of death,
With a holy psalm sung ower mine head,
And swoofit with my last breath;

"With a kind hand to close mine eyne,
And shed a tear for me;
But, alack, for poverty and eild,
Siccan joys I can never see!

"For, though I have toil'd these seventy years,
Wasting both blood and bone,
Striving for riches as for life,
Yet riches I have none.

"For though I seized them by the tail,
With proud and joyful mind,
Yet did they take them wings and fly,
And leave me here behind;

"They left me here to rant and rair,
Mocking my raving tongue,
Though skraighing like ane gainder goose
That is 'reft of his young.

"Oh, woe is me! for all my toil,
And all my dear-bought gains,
Yet must I die a cauldrife death,
In poverty and pains!

"Oh! where are all my riches gone,
Where, or to what country?
There is gold enough into this world,
But none of it made for me.

"Yet Providence was sore misled,
My riches to destroy,
Else many a poor and virtuous heart
Should have had cause of joy."

Then the poor auld man laid down his head,
And rairit for very grief,
And streikit out his limbs to die;
For he knew of no relief.

But bye there came a lovely dame,
Upon a palfrey gray;
And she listen'd unto the auld man's tale,
And all he had to say,—

Of all his griefs, and sore regret,
For things that him befell,
And because he could not feed the poor,
Which thing he loved so well.

"It is great pity," quod the dame,
"That one so very kind,
So full of charity and love,
And of such virtuous mind,

"Should lie and perish on a brae,
Of poverty and eild,
Without one single hand to prove
His solace and his shield."

She took the old man her behind
Upon her palfrey gray,
And swifter nor the southland wind
They scour'd the velvet brae.

And the palfrey's tail behind did sail
O'er locker and o'er lea;
While the tears stood in the old man's eyne,
With swiftness and with glee;

For the comely dame had promised him
Of riches mighty store,
That his kind heart might have full scope
For feeding of the poor.

"Now grace me save!" said the good auld man;
"Where bears thy bridle hand?
Art thou going to break the Greenock bank?
Or the bank of fair Scotland?

"My conscience hardly this may brook;
But on this you may depend,
Whatever is given unto me,
Is to a righteous end."

"Keep thou thy seat," said the comely dame,
"And conscience clear and stenne;
There is plenty of gold in the sea's bottom
To enrich ten thousand men.

"Ride on with me, and thou shalt see
What treasures there do lie;
For I can gallop the emerald wave,
And along its channels dry."

"If thou canst do that," said the good old man,
"Thou shalt ride thy lane for me;
For I can neither swim, nor dive,
Nor walk the raging sea:

"For the salt water would blind mine eyne,
And what should I see there?
And buller buller down my throat;
Which thing I could not bear."

But away and away flew the comely dame
O'er moorland and o'er fell;
But whether they went north or south,
The old man could not tell.

And the palfrey's tail behind did sail,
A comely sight to see,
Like little wee comet of the dale
Gaun skimmering o'er the lea.

When the old man came to the salt sea's brink,
He quaked at the ocean faem;
But the palfrey splash'd into the same,
As it were its native hame.

"Now Christ us save!" cried the good old man;
"Hath madness seized thine head?
For we shall sink in the ocean wave,
And bluther quhill we be dead."

But the palfrey dash'd o'er the bounding wave,
With snifter and with stenne;
It was firmer nor the firmest sward
In all the Deffane glen.

But the good old man he held, as death
Holds by a sinner's tail;
Or as a craven clings to life,
When death does him assail.

And the little wee palfrey shot away,
Like dragon's fiery train,
And up the wave, and down the wave,
Like meteor of the main.

And its streaming tail behind did sail
With shimmer and with sheen;
And whenever it struck the mane of the wave,
The flashes of fire were seen.

"Ochone! ochone!" said the good old man,
"It is awesome to be here!
I fear these riches for which I greine
Shall cost me very dear:

"For we are running such perilous race
As mortals never ran;
And the devil is in that little beast,
If ever he was in man!"

"Hurrah! hurrah! my bonnie gray!"
Cried the Maiden of the Sea;
"Ha! thou canst sweep the emerant deep
Swifter nor bird can flee!

"For thou wast bred in a coral bed,
Beneath a silver sun,
Where the broad daylight, or the moon by night,
Could never never won;

"Where the buirdly whale could never sail,
Nor the lazy walrus row;
And the little wee thing that gave thee suck,
Was a thing of the caves below.

"And thou shalt run till the last sun
Sink o'er the westland hill;
And thou shalt ride the ocean tide
Till all its waves lie still.

"Away! away! my bonnie gray!
Where billows rock the dead,
And where the richest prize lies low,
In all the ocean's bed.

The palfrey scrapit with his foot,
And snorkit fearsomelye;
Then lookit over his left shoulder,
To see what he could see.

And as ever you saw a moudiwort
Bore into a foggy lea,
So did this little devilish beast
Dive down into the sea.

The good old man he gave a rair
As loud as he could strain:
But the waters closed aboon his head,
And down he went amain!

But he neither blutherit with his breath,
Nor gaspit with his ganne,
And not one drop of salt water
Adown his thropple ran.

But he rode as fair, and he rode as free,
As if all swaithed and furl'd
In MacIntosh's patent ware,—
The marvel of this world.

At length they came to a gallant ship,
In the channels of the sea,
That leant her shoulder to a rock,
With her masts full sore aglee.

And there lay many a gallant man,
Rock'd by the moving main;
And soundly soundly did they sleep,
Never to wake again.

The ships might sail, and friends might wail,
On margin of the sea,
But news of them they would never hear
Till the days of eternitye;

For it was plain, as plain could be,
From all they saw around,
That the ship had gone down to the deep
Without one warning sound—

Without one prayer pour'd to heaven—
Without one parting sigh,
Like sea-bird sailing on the wave,
That dives, we know not why.

It was a woeful sight to see,
In bowels of the deep,
Lovers and lemans lying clasp'd
In everlasting sleep.

So calmly they lay on their glitty beds,
And in their hammocks swung,
And the billows rock'd their drowsy forms,
And over their cradles sung.

And there was laid a royal maid,
As calm as if in heaven,
Who had three gold rings on each finger,
On her mid finger seven;

And she had jewels in her ears,
And bracelets brave to see;
The gold that was around her head
Would have bought earldoms three.

Then the good old man pull'd out his knife—
It was both sharp and clear—
And he cut off the maiden's fingers small,
And the jewels from ilka ear.

"Oh, shame, oh, shame!" said the comely dame,
"Woe worth thy ruthless hand!
How darest thou mangle a royal corpse,
Once flower of many a land?

"And all for the sake of trinkets vain,
'Mid such a store as this?"
"Ochone, alake!" quod the good auld man,
"You judge full far amiss;

"It is better they feed the righteous poor,
That on their God depend;
Than to lie slumbering in the deep
For neither use nor end,

"Unless to grace a partan's limb
With costly, shining ore,
Or deck a lobster's burly snout—
A beast which I abhor!"

Then the Sea-maid smiled a doubtful smile,
And said, with lifted e'e—
"Full many a righteous man I have seen,
But never a one like thee!

"But thou shalt have thine heart's desire,
In feeding the upright;
And all the good shall bless the day
That first thou saw the light."

Then she loaded him with gems of gold,
On channel of the main;
Yet the good old man was not content,
But turn'd him back again.

And every handful he put in,
He said right wistfullye,
"Och, this will ane whole fortune prove
For one poor familye!"

And he neifuit in, and he neifuit in,
And never could refrain,
Quhill the little wee horse he could not move,
Nor mount the wave again;

But he snorkit with his little nose,
Till he made the sea rocks ring,
And waggit his tail across the wave
With many an angry swing.

"Come away, come away, my little bonnie gray,
Think of the good before;
There is as much gold upon thy back
As will feed ten thousand poor!"

Then the little wee horse he strauchlit on,
Through darkling scenes sublime—
O'er shoals, and stones, and dead men's bones;
But the wave he could not climb:

But along, along, he sped along
The floors of the silent sea,
With a world of waters o'er his head,
And groves of the coral tree.

And the tide stream flow'd, and the billows row'd
An hundred fathoms high;
And the light that lighted the floors below
Seem'd from some other sky;

For it stream'd and trembled on its way,
Of beams and splendour shorn,
And flow'd with an awful holiness,
As on a journey borne,

Till at length they saw the glorious sun,
Far in the west that glow'd,
Flashing like fire-flaughts up and down
With every wave that row'd.

Then the old man laugh'd a heartsome laugh,
And a heartsome laugh laugh'd he,
To see the sun in such a trim
Dancing so furiouslye;

For he thought the angels of the even
Had taken the blessed sun,
To toss in the blue blanket of heaven,
To make them glorious fun.

But at length the May and her palfrey gray,
And the good old man beside,
Set their three heads aboon the wave,
And came in with the flowing tide.

Then all the folks on the shores of Fife
A terror flight began,
And the burgess men of old Kinross
They left their hames and ran;

For they ken'd the Sea-maid's glossy e'e,
Like the blue of heaven that shone;
And the little wee horse of the coral cave,
That neither had blood nor bone.

And they said, when she came unto their coast,
She never came there for good,
But warning to give of storms and wrecks,
And the shedding of Christian blood.

Alake for the good men of Kinross,
For their wits were never rife!
For now she came with a mighty store,
For the saving of poor men's life.

When the little wee horse he found his feet
On the firm ground and the dry,
He shook his mane, and gave a graen,
And threw his heels on high,

Quhill the gold play'd jingle on the shore
That eased him of his pain;
Then he turn'd and kick'd it where it lay,
In very great disdain.

And he hitt the old man right behind
With such unsparing might,
That he made him jump seven ells and more,
And on his face to light.

"Now, woe be to thee for a wicked beast!
For since ever thy life began,
I never saw thee lift thy foot
Against a righteous man.

"But fare-thee-well, thou good old man,
Thy promise keep in mind;
Let this great wealth I have given to thee
Be a blessing to thy kind.

"So as thou strive so shalt thou thrive,
And be it understood
That I must visit thee again,
For evil or for good."

Then the bonnie May she rode her way
Along the sea-wave green,
And away and away on her palfrey gray,
Like the ocean's comely queen.

As she fared up the Firth of Forth
The fishes fled all before,
And a thousand cods and haddocks brave
Ran swattering right ashore.

A hundred-and-thretty huirdly whales
Went snoring up the tide,
And wide on Alloa's fertile holms
They gallop'd ashore and died.[1]

[1] As this is likely to be the only part of my truthful ballad the veracity of which may be disputed, I assure the reader

But it grieveth my heart to tell to you,
What I never have told before,
Of that man so righteous and so good,
So long as he was poor;

But, whenever he got more store of gold
Than ever his wits could tell,
He never would give a mite for good,
Neither for heaven nor hell.

But he brooded o'er that mighty store
With sordid heart of sin,
And the houseless wight, or the poor by night,
His gate wan never within.

And the last accounts I had of him
Are very strange to tell—
He was seen with the May and the palfrey gray
Riding fiercely out through hell.

And aye she cried, "Hurrah, hurrah!
Make room for me and mine!
I bring you the man of Alloa
To his punishment condign!

"His Maker tried him in the fire,
To make his heart contrite;
But, when he gat his heart's desire,
He proved a hypocrite."

Then all you poor and contrite ones,
In deep afflictions hurl'd,
Oh, never grieve or vex your hearts
For the riches of this world;

For they bring neither health nor peace
Unto thy spirit's frame;
And there is a treasure better far,
Which minstrel dares not name.

Hast thou not heard an olden say,
By one who could not lee?—
It is something of a great big beast
Going through a needle's e'e.

Then think of that, and be content;
For life is but a day,
And the night of death is gathering fast
To close upon your way.

Elen of Reigh.

Have you never heard of Elen of Reigh,
The fairest flower of the north countrie?
The maid that left all maidens behind,
In all that was lovely, sweet, and kind:
As sweet as the breeze o'er beds of balm,
As happy and gay as the gamesome lamb,
As light as the feather that dances on high,
As blithe as the lark in the breast of the sky,
As modest as young rose that blossoms too soon,
As mild as the breeze on a morning of June;
Her voice was the music's softest key,
And her form the comeliest symmetry.

But let bard describe her smile who can,
For that is beyond the power of man:
There never was pen that hand could frame,
Nor tongue that falter'd at maiden's name,
Could once a distant tint convey
Of its lovely and benignant ray.
You have seen the morning's folding vest
Hang dense and pale upon the east,
As if an angel's hand had strewn
The dawning's couch with the cider down,
And shrouded with a curtain gray
The cradle of the infant day?
And 'mid this orient dense and pale,
Through one small window of the vale,
You have seen the sun's first radiant hue
Lightening the dells and vales of dew,
With smile that seem'd through glory's rim
From dwellings of the cherubim;
And you have thought, with holy awe,
A lovelier sight you never saw,
Scorning the heart who dared to doubt it?
Alas! you little knew about it!
At beauty's shrine you ne'er have knelt,
Nor felt the flame that I have felt;
Nor chanced the virgin smile to see
Of beauty's model, Elen of Reigh!

When sunbeams on the river blaze,
You on its glory scarce can gaze;
But when the moon's delirious beam,
In giddy splendour wooes the stream,
Its mellow'd light is so refined,
'Tis like a gleam of soul and mind;
Its gentle ripple glittering by,
Like twinkle of a maiden's eye;
While, all amazed at heaven's steepness,
You gaze into its liquid deepness,
And see some beauties that excel—
Visions "to dream of, not to tell"—
A downward soul of living hue,
So mild, so modest, and so blue!

What am I raving of just now?
Forsooth, I scarce can say to you—
A moonlight river beaming by,
Or holy depth of virgin's eye!

that it is a literal fact; and that, with a single tide, in the month of March, a few years ago, not less than 130 whales were left ashore in the vicinity of Alloa. The men of Alloa called them young ones; but to me it appeared that they had been immense fishes. Their skeletons at a distance were like those of large horses. Two old ones ran up as far as the mill-dam of Cambus, on the Devon, where they were left by the retreating tide, and where, after a day's severe exercise and excellent sport to a great multitude, they were both slain, along with a young one, which one of the old whales used every effort to defend, bellowing most fearfully when she saw it attacked. On testifying my wonder to the men of Cambus why the whales should all have betaken them to the dry land, I was answered by a sly fellow, that "A mermaid had been seen driving them up the firth, which had frightened them so much, it had put them all out of their judgments!"

Unconscious bard! what perilous dreaming!
Is nought on earth to thee beseeming?
Will nothing serve, but beauteous women?—
No, nothing else. But 'tis strange to me,
If you never heard aught of Elen of Reigh.

But whenever you breathe the breeze of balm,
Or smile at the frolics of the lamb,
Or watch the stream by the light of the moon,
Or weep for the rosebud that opes too soon,
Or when any beauty of this creation
Moves your delight or admiration,
You then may try, whatever it be,
That to compare with Elen of Reigh:
But never presume that lovely creature
Once to compare with aught in nature;
For earth has neither form nor face
Which heart can ween or eye can trace,
That once comparison can stand
With Elen, the flower of fair Scotland.

'Tis said that angels are passing fair
And lovely beings: I hope they are:
But for all their beauty of form and wing,
If lovelier than the maid I sing,
They needs must be—I cannot tell—
Something beyond all parallel;
Something admitted, not believed,
Which heart of man had ne'er conceived;
But these are beings of mental bliss,
Not things to love, and soothe, and kiss.—
There is something dear, say as we will,
In winsome human nature still.

Elen of Reigh was the flower of our wild,
Elen of Reigh was an only child,
A motherless lamb, in childhood thrown
On bounteous Nature, and her alone;
But who can mould like that mighty dame
The mind of fervour and mounting flame,
The mind that beams with a glow intense
For fair and virtuous excellence?
Not one! though many a mighty name,
High margin'd on the lists of fame,
Has blazon'd her ripe tuition high,—
The world has own'd it, and well may I!
But most of all that right had she,
The flower of our mountains, fair Elen of Reigh.

But human life is like a river—
Its brightness lasts not on for ever—
That dances from its native braes,
As pure as maidhood's early days:
But soon, with dark and sullen motion,
It rolls into its funeral ocean,
And those whose currents are the slightest,
And shortest run, are aye the brightest:
So is our life—its latest wave
Rolls dark and solemn to the grave;
And soon o'ercast was Elen's day,
And changed, as must my sportive lay.

When beauty is in its rosy prime,
There is something sacred and sublime,
To see all living worth combined
In such a lovely being's mind;
Each thing for which we would wish to live,
Each grace, each virtue Heaven can give.
Such being was Elen, if such can be;
A faith unstained, a conscience free,
Pure Christian love and charity—
All breath'd in such a holy strain,
The hearts of men could not refrain
From wonder at what they heard and saw;
Even greatest sinners stood in awe,
At seeing a form and soul unshadow'd—
A model for the walks of maidhood.

You will feel a trembling wish to know,
If such a being could e'er forego
Her onward path of heavenly aim,
To love a thing of mortal frame.
Ah! never did heart in bosom dwell,
That loved so warmly and so well,
Or with such ligaments profound
Was twined another's heart around!
But blush not—dread not, I intreat,
Nor tremble for a thing so sweet.

Not comely youth, with downy chin,
Nor manhood's goodlier form, could win
One wistful look, or dewdrop sheen,
From eye so heavenly and serene.
Her love that with her life began
Was set on thing more pure than man—
'Twas on a virgin, of like mind,
As pure, as gentle, as refined:
They in one cradle slept when young,
Were taught by the same blessed tongue,
Aye smiled each other's face to see,
Were nursed upon the self-same knee,
And the first word each tongue could frame,
Was a loved playmate's cheering name.

Like two young poplars of the vale,
Like two young twin roes of the dale,
They grew; and life had no alloy—
Their fairy path was all of joy.
They danced, they sung, they play'd, they roved,
And oh, how dearly as they loved!
While in that love, with reverence due,
Their God and their Redeemer too
Were twined—which made it the sincerer,
And still the holier and the dearer.

Each morning when they woke from sleep,
They kneel'd and prayed with reverence deep;
Then raised their sightly forms so trim,
And sung their little morning hymn.

Then tripping joyfully and bland,
They to the school went hand in hand:
Came home as blithsome and as bright,
And slept in other's arms each night.

Sure in such sacred bonds to live,
Nature has nothing more to give.
So loved they on, and still more dear,
From day to day, from year to year;
And when their flexile forms began
To take the mould so loved by man,
They blush'd—embraced each other less,
And wept at their own loveliness,
As if their bliss were overcast,
And days of feelings pure were past.

But who can fathom or reprove
The counsels of the God of love,
Or stay the mighty hand of Him
Who dwells between the cherubim?
No man nor angel: all must be
Submiss to his supreme decree.
And so it happ'd that this fair maid,
In all her virgin charms array'd,
Just when upon the verge she stood
Of bright and seemly womanhood,
From this fair world was call'd away,
In mildest and in gentlest way,—
Fair world indeed; but still akin
To much of sorrow and of sin.

Poor Elen watch'd the parting strife
Of her she loved far more than life;
The placid smile that strove to tell
To her beloved that all was well.
Oh! many a holy thing they said,
And many a prayer together pray'd,
And many a hymn, both morn and even,
Was breathed upon the breeze of heaven,
Which Hope, on wings of sacred love,
Presented at the gates above.

The last words into ether melt,
The last squeeze of the hand is felt;
And the last breathings, long apart,
Like aspirations of the heart,
Told Elen that she now was left,
A thing of love and joy bereft—
A sapling from its parent torn,
A rose upon a widow'd thorn,
A twin roe, or bewilder'd lamb,
Reft both of sister and of dam—
How could she weather out the strife
And sorrows of this mortal life!

The last rites of funereal gloom—
The pageant heralds of the tomb,
That more in form than feeling tell
The sorrows of the last farewell—
Are all observed with decent care,
And but one soul of grief was there.
The virgin mould, so mild and meet,
Is roll'd up in its winding sheet;
Affection's yearnings form'd the rest,
The dead rose rustles on the breast,
The wrists are bound with bracelet bands,
The pallid gloves are on the hands,
And all the flowers the maid held dear
Are strew'd within her gilded bier;
A hundred sleeves with lawn are pale,
A hundred crapes wave in the gale,
And, in a motley, mix'd array
The funeral train winds down Glen-Reigh.
Alack! how shortly thoughts were lasting
Of the grave to which they all were hasting!

The grave is open; the mourners gaze
On bones and skulls of former days;
The pall's withdrawn—in letters sheen,
"Maria Gray—aged eighteen,"
Is read by all with heaving sighs
And ready hands to moisten'd eyes.
Solemn and slow, the bier is laid
Into its deep and narrow bed,
And the mould rattles o'er the dead!

What sound like that can be conceived!
That thunder to a soul bereaved,
When crumbling bones grate on the bier
Of all the bosom's core held dear!
'Tis like a growl of hideous wrath—
The last derisive laugh of Death
Over his victim that lies under;
The heart's last bands then rent asunder,
And no communion more to be
Till time melt in eternity!

From that dread moment Elen's soul
Seem'd to outfly its earthly goal;
And her refined and subtile frame,
Uplifted by unearthly flame,
Seem'd soul alone—in likelihood,
A spirit made of flesh and blood—
A thing whose being and whose bliss
Were bound to better world than this.

Her face, that with new lustre beam'd,
Like features of a seraph seem'd:
A meekness, mix'd with a degree
Of fervid, wild sublimity,
Mark'd all her actions and her moods.
She sought the loneliest solitudes,
By the dingly dell or the silver spring,
Her holy hymns of the dead to sing;
For all her songs and language bland
Were of a loved and heavenly land—
A land of saints and angels fair,
And of a late dear dweller there;
But, watch'd full often, ears profane
Once heard the following solemn strain:—

Maria Gray. A Song.

Who says that Maria Gray is dead,
And that I in this world can see her never?
Who says she is laid in her cold death-bed,
The prey of the grave and of death for ever!
Ah! they know little of my dear maid,
Or kindness of her spirit's giver;

For every night she is by my side,
By the morning bower, or the moonlight river.

Maria was bonnie, when she was here,
When flesh and blood was her mortal dwelling;
Her smile was sweet, and her mind was clear,
And her form all human forms excelling.
But oh! if they saw Maria now,
With her looks of pathos and of feeling,
They would see a cherub's radiant brow,
To ravish'd mortal eyes unveiling!

The rose is the fairest of earthly flowers—
It is all of beauty and of sweetness—
So my dear maid, in the heavenly bowers,
Excels in beauty and in meetness.
She has kiss'd my cheek, she has kemb'd my hair,
And made a breast of heaven my pillow,
And promised her God to take me there,
Before the leaf falls from the willow.

Farewell, ye homes of living men!
I have no relish for your pleasures—
In the human face I nothing ken
That with my spirit's yearning measures:
I long for onward bliss to be,
A day of joy, a brighter morrow;
And from this bondage to be free.
Farewell, thou world of sin and sorrow!

Oh great was the wonder, and great was the dread,
Of the friends of the living, and friends of the dead;
For every evening and morning were seen
Two maidens, where only one should have been!
Still hand in hand they moved, and sung
Their hymns, on the walks they trode when young;
And one night, some of the watcher train
Were said to have heard this holy strain
Wafted upon the trembling air:
It was sung by one, although two were there:—

Hymn ober a Dying Virgin.

"O thou whom once thy redeeming love
Brought'st down to earth from the throne above,
Stretch forth thy cup of salvation free
To a thirsty soul, that longs for thee!
O thou who left'st the realms of day,
Whose blessed head in a manger lay,
See her here prostrate before thy throne,
Who trusts in thee, and in thee alone!

"O thou, who once, as thy earthly rest,
Wert cradled on a virgin's breast,
For the sake of one who held thee dear,
Extend thy love to this virgin here!
Thou Holy One, whose blood was spilt
Upon the cross, for human guilt,
This humbled virgin's longings see,
And take her soul in peace to thee!"

That very night the mysterious dame
Not home to her father's dwelling came,
Though her maidens sat in chill dismay,
And watch'd and call'd, till the break of day.
But in the dawning, with fond regard,
They sought the bower where the song was heard,
And found her form stretch'd on the green,
The loveliest corpse that ever was seen.
She lay as in balmy sleep reposed,
While her lips and eyes were sweetly closed,
As if about to awake and speak;
For a dimpling smile was on her cheek,
And the pale rose there had a gentle glow,
Like the morning's tint on a wreath of snow.

All was so seemly and serene
As she lay composed upon the green,
It was plain to all that no human aid,
But an angel's hand, had the body laid;
For from her form there seem'd to rise,
The sweetest odours of paradise.
Around her temples and brow so fair,
White roses were twined in her auburn hair,
All bound with a birch and holly band,
And the Book of God was in her right hand.

Farewell, ye flowerets of sainted fame,
Ye sweetest maidens of mortal frame;
A sacred love o'er your lives presided,
And in your deaths you were not divided!
Oh, blessed are they who bid adieu
To this erring nature as pure as you!

The Powris of Moscke.

Blynde Robene sat on Bowman Lawe,
And houlit upon his horne;
And aye he bummit, and he strummit,
Quhille patience wals foreworne;

And the verye hillis in travail seemit,
Thoche noe yung hillis were borne!
For they yellit and youtit soe yirlischly
Als their bouellis hald bene torne.

And by him sat ane byzenit boi,
Ane brat of brukit breide;
His moder wals ane weirdlye witche,
Of Queen's foreste the dreide;

But whether the deuill did him bygette,
Or ane droiche of Elfinlande,
Or ane water-kelpie horrible,
I colde not understande.

But he hald not tastit broz that dai,
Nor kirne-mylke, wheye, nor brede;
So hunger raif at his yung herte,
And wals like to be his dede.

And aye he said, "Dere maistere mine,
What spring is that you playe?
For there are listeniris gadderyng rounde,
And I wish we were awaye."

"Quhat doste thou se, my bonnie boi,
I pray thee tell to mee?
I won these notis frae the fairye folke
Beneth the grene wode tre;

"And I weenit it wals ane charmed spring,
By its wilde melodye:
Och wo is mee that I am blynde!
Littil boi, quhat dost thou se?"

"I se the hartis but and the hyndis,
Stand quaking to the morne,
And wildlye snouke the westlyn wyndis,
And shaike the braken horne:

"And the littil wee raeis they cour betwene,
With their backis of dapplit greye;
And the gaitis they are waggyng their aulde greye
berdis—
Lorde, gin we were awaye!"

"Sit still, sit still, my bonnie boi;
I haif shawit you, with gode wille,
Ane littil of the Powris of Grande Moseke,
I will shaw you greater stille.

"Lend me thine eire, and thou shalt heire
Some thrillyng fallis I wis,
By minstrelis maide, and eithlye playit
In oder worldis than this."

Blynde Robene liftit his stokel horne,
And brushit it all full cleine;
It wals laide with the eevorye and the goude,
And glancit with the sylver sheine;

He heezit the horne intil his muthe,
And soundit the airel hole,
And the melodye that that horne spake
His herte it colde not thole;

For the soundis went hie and the soundis went lowe,
Sae laigh and sae hie did they spryng,
That the laigh anes bummit in the world belowe,
And the hie maide the heavinis ryng.

"Och holde thine hande, mine deire maistere!
Thou maikest mine herte to blede;
And holde that heavinly braith of thine,
Or the soundis will be mine dede."

"Ha! sayest thou soe, mine bonnie boi?
To me thou art still more deire!
I trowit not of thy taiste before,
Nor of thine blessit eire.

"But looke thee rounde, my bonnie boi,
And looke to holme and heathe,
And caste thine eyne to heavin above,
And to the yird benethe;

"And note the shadowis and the shapis
That hover on hille and gaire;
And tell me trowlye, my bonnie boi,
Of all thou seest there."

The elfin stoode up on his feite,
And Robenis breiste he saynit;
And aye he chatterit with his tethe,
And grefously he grainit:

And the sobbis that rase fra his stamocke
Wolde birste ane herte of claye;
But neuir ane worde he saide but this—
"Lorde, gin we were awaye!"

Blynde Robene stymit him rounde about,
And he gapit gastrouslye—
"Och, tell me, tell me, littil boi,
Of all that thou doste se."

"I se the cloudis creipe up the hille,
And down the hille like wise;
And there are spyritis gadderyng rounde
Fra baith the yird and skyis:

"The ghastis are glyming with their dede eyne
Lapperit with mist and claye,
And they are fauldyng out their windyng shetis,
And their flesche is faidyng awaye."

"If that be true, my bonnie boi,
Strainge visiteris are rife!
Well, we moste gif them ane oder spring
To sweiten their waesome life.

"I never kennit, soe helpe me Heavin,
The ghastis had had soche skille,
Or knewe soe well ane maisteris hande,
Sothe they moste haif their fille;

"For come they up, or come they downe,
The ghaste or the elfin greye,
Till the fairyis come and heire their spring
I cannot goe away."

"Och deire! och deire!" thochtis the littil boi,
The teire blindyng his e'e,
"We are far fra ony meite or drynk,
Quhat will become of me?

"Och, holde thine hand, deire maistere mine,
For pitye's saike now stay,
Or helle will sone be about our luggis,
And deirlye we shall paye:

"The bullis are booyng in the wode,
The deiris stande all abreiste;
You haif wakenit the dede out of their graifs—
Lorde! quhat shall you do neiste?"

"Taik thou noe caris, my littil boi,
Quhateuir thou mayest vewe,
For sholde ane elf or fairye rise
From every belle of dewe,—

"Sholde all the fiendis that euir gowlit
Downe in the deipis for paine,
Spiele up, and stande in thousandis rounde,
I wolde playe them downe again."

"Faithe, that is strainge!" then thochtis the boi,
But yet he said no thing:
"Och, Moseke is grande, my bonnie boi,
We'll haif ane oder spring."

The boyis lip curlit to his noz
Als bende als ony bowe,
And syne his muthe begoude to thrawe—
Quhat colde the hurcheon doo?

His fastyng spittol he swallowit downe,
With rattlyng, rhattyng dynne;
Bnt hit hardlye wet the gyzenit throte,
For all wals toome withynne.

Blynde Robene set his horne to his muthe,
And wet his airel hole;
"Tout-tout! tout-tout!" quod blynde Robene,
Quhille the very rockis did yolle.

But the boi he said unto himself,
Als bitterlye als colde be,
"Gin I hald but my mornyng broz,
Deuill fetche the spring and thee!"

He lookit to hille, he lookit to daille,
Then rose with joyous speide——
"The fairyis moste come there is noe doubte,
Or death is all my meide;

"Now holde thine hande, deire maistere mine,
And fly rychte speidilye;
There are seventy-seven belted knychtes
Comyng rankyng downe the le;

"There are fire and furye in their lookis
Als they tredde on the wynde;
And there are seventy-seven bonnie damis
All dauneyng them behynde.

"The fairye knychtis haif sordis and sheldis,
Like chrystal spleetis to se;
And the damis are cledde in grass-grene sylke,
And kyltit abone the kne."

"Quhat's that you say, mine bonnie boi?"—
Och Robenis muthe grew wyde!
And he poukit the hurcheon with his hande,
And helde his lug asyde:

And aye he glymit him rounde about,
And strainit his dim quhyte eyne;
For he grenit to see the dapper limbis
All quidderyng on the grene.

"Ochon! ochon!" quod blynde Robene,
"My blyndnesse I may rewe;
But quhat it wals to want mine sychte
Till now I neuir knewe!

"For ae glance of the bonnie damis
Dauneyng soe blythe on le,
Each with her sailyng grene seymar
Soe far abone the kne"—

"Och, not soe far, mine deire maistere,
It is modeste all and meite;
And like the wynde on sunnye hillis
Shimmer their lovelye feite.

"But the knychtis are in ane awsum raige,
Raumpaugyng on the le:
For lofe of lyfe, now blynde Robene,
Come let us rise and fle."

"And can I leife the winsum damis,
All fryskyng on the grene!
Och noe! och noe! mine littil boi,
More manneris I haif sene.

"I will gyf them ane spring will gar them skyppe,
And rise with mychte and maine,
Quhille they dyng their hedis agynst the sternis,
And bob on the yird againe.

"I will gar them jompe sae merrilye hie,
The blythsum seventy-seven;
Quhille they coole their littil bonnie brestis
Amid the cloudis of heavin.

"Liloo—liloo"—quod blynde Robene,
(Heavinis mercye als he blewe!)
"Now I shall gar the fairye folkis
The Powris of Moseke vewe."

But the boi he weepit rychte piteouslye,
And down ward sore did bowe,
And helde his middis with both his handis,
For feire he sholde fall through.

Saint Bothan! als blynde Robene blewe,
Sae yirlisch and sae eleire!
And aye he turnit his stokel horne,
That fairyis all mochte heire.

And aye he glymit with his quhyte eyne,
Thoche sore the horne colde jar,
For he longit to see the lily limbe
And kyltit grene seymar.

"Looke yet againe, my bonnie boi,
At the fairye damis anewe,
And tell me how their robis appeire
In texture and in hewe!"

"Och, they are lychtlye cledde, maistere,
Soe lychte I dare not showe,
For I se their lovelye tiny formis,
Als pure as mountaine snowe.

"Their robis are made of the gossamere,
Wove of the misty sheine,
And dyit in the rainbowis gaudy gaire
Sae glauncyng and sae grene."

Blynde Robene clewe his tufted heide,
And raif his auld greye hayre,
And the teiris wolde haif fallen from his eyne,
Had anie eyne bene there;

He turnit up his cleire face for braith,
And to eisse his crouchand backe;
And then he toutit and he blewe
Quhille bethe his luggis did cracke.

"Och, holde your hande, deire maistere mine!"
Cryit the boi with yirlisch screime,
"For there is the deuill comyng on
With his eyne like fiery gleime;

"His fingeris are like lobster taeis,
And long als barrowe tramis;
His tethe are reide-hot tedderstakis,
And barkit are his hammis:

"His tayle it is ane fierye snaike
Aye wrything far behynde,
Its fangis are two elothe yardis in length,
And it is coolyng them in the wynde."

Blynde Robenis face grewe lang and blanke,
And his lyppe begoude to fall;—
"That is ane gueste, my littil boi,
I like the worst of all!

"The fairyis are mine own deire folkis;
The ghastis are glydyng geire;
But the deuill is ane oder chappe!
Lorde! quhat's he sekyng here?"

Blynde Robene maide als he wolde rise,
To flye als he were faine;
But the fairye damis came in his mynde,
And he crouched him downe againe.

"Come well, come woe, I shall not goe,"
Said Robene manfullye;
"I will play to my welcome fairye folkis,
And the deuill may rayre for me!"

Againe the notis knellit through the ayre
Sae mychtye and sae deivin,
For ilkane burel hole wals loosit—
Ane hole wals blawn in heavin:

And the soundis went in, and the soundis went ben,
Quhille the folkis abone the skie
And the angelis caperit ane braif corante
Als they went stroamyng bye.

The Powris of Moseke wals sae greate,
Sae mychtye and devyne,
That Robene ravit for very joi
Quhille his quhyte eyne did shyne;

And his cleire countenance wals blente
With a joi and a pryde sublyme—
"There is no hope," quod the littil boi,
"He will playe quhille the end of tyme!"

But in the grenewode ower the hill,
There graissit ane herde of kyne,
Waidyng in grene gerse to the knes,
And grofellyng lyke to swyne;

For they snappit it with their muckil mouis,
Quhille sullenlye they lowit,
And aye they noddit their lang quhite hornis,
And they chumpit and they chowit.

Och, they were fierce! and nefer fedde
At mainger nor at stalle;
But among them there wals ane curlye bulle,
The fiereeste of them all.

His hornis were quhyte als driven snowe,
And sharpe als poyntit pole;
But his herte wals blacker than his hyde,
Thoche that wals lyke ane cole.

This bulle he heirit blynde Robenis notis
Passe ower his heide abofe,
And he thochte it wals ane kindlye eowe
Rowtyng for gentil lofe.

And this bulle he thochtis into himselle,
How this braife courteous eowe
Might haif passit far for lofe that dai,
And travellit faustyng too:
"I will goe and meite her," thochtis the bulle,
"Als gallante brote sholde doo."

And this bulle he thochtis into himselle,
"This dame rowtis mychtye loude!
I will sende furth ane voyee shall maike her quaile,
And she shall not be soe proude!"

And ower the hille and downe the hille,
The bulle came roaryng furth,
And with his hofe but and his horne
He ture the shaikyng yirth;

And aye he brullyit and he bruffit,
Quhille his braith it singit the grasse;
And then he raisit his noz and squeelit
Rychte lyke ane eoddye asse.

But the woefulle boi he laye acrosse
And grofellit on the grounde,
And with the blare of Robenis horne
He nefer heirde the sounde:

But the soundis they pereit blynde Robenis eire,
For ane sherpe eire had hee:
"Is that the deuill, my littil boi,
That rayris soe boysterouslye?"

"Och, maistere, it is ane great black bulle
Comyng foamyng madlye here;
He has fleyit awaye the fairye folkis,
And the deuill has fledde for feire.

"With his hornis sherper than ane speire
The hillis grene breste is rift,
And his tayle is curlyng up the eloudis,
And swooping on the lyfte.

"His eyne are two reide eolis of fire,
You heire his horryde crie;
The mountaine is quakyng like ane deire,
Quhen the houndis are yowting bye."

Blynde Robene raisit his face and smylit,
And shoke his lockis of snow;
"Och! great is the Powir of Moseke, boi—
Greater nor ouchtis belowe!

"I haif playit the spyritis fra the deipe,
And playit them downe againe;
And that is the Bulle of Norrowaye
I haif brochte outower the maine.

"He is something, I haif heirde them saye,
Betwene ane gode and beiste;
But sit thou still, my bonnie boi,
I will charme him to the eiste."

The bulle now lookit eiste and weste,
And he lookit unto the northe;
But he colde not se the kyndlye dame
For quham he hald comit furth.

"Too—too! tee—too!" quod blynde Robene,
Quhille hee raif the herkenyng ayre;
Then the bulle he gallopit lyke ane fiende,
For he thochte his cowe wals there.

But quhan he came nere to the plaisse,
Thochtyng his lofe to fynde,
And saw nochtis but ane auld mynstrelle,
He wals nouther to houlde nor bynde!

He ryppit the grounde with hofe and horne,
And maide the rockis to yelle;
For every rore that the black bulle gae
Wals lyke ane burst of helle.

Blynde Robenis braith begoude to cut,
His notis begoude to shaike;
These burstis of raige he colde not stande,
They maide his herte to aike.

"Och, maistere, maistere!" cryit the boi,
Squeikyng with yirlisch dynne,
"It is but ane bowshote to the wode
That overhingis the lynne.

"Let us haiste and won the Bowman Lynne,
And hyde in boshe or tre;
Or, by Saint Fillanis sholder-bone,
Charme als you lyke for me!"

Blynde Robene bangit him to his feite,
Alane he dorste not staye,
For he thochte als well als the littil boi,
It wals tyme he were awaye.

He helde out his lang necke and ranne,
Quhille low his back did bowe;
And he turnit up his cleire quhyte face,
Als blynde men wonte to doo.

And ower rocke, and ower rone,
He lyftit his feite full hie;
And ower stocke, and ower stone,
Blynde Robene he did flie!

But Robenis braith is all forespente,
He gaspit sore anone;
The bulle is thonderyng at his backe;
Blynde Robene he is gone!

For his haiste grewe greatir than his speide,
His bodie it pressit on
Faster than feite colde followe up,
And on the grounde he is prone!

But yet to profe blynde Robenis speide
Quhen he felle on his face before,
He plowit ane furrowe with his noz
For two clothe yardis and more.

Ah! laik-a-day! now, blynde Robene,
Thy moseke moste depairte;
That cursit Bulle of Norrowaye
Is fomyng ower thine herte.

Och, woe betyde that wicked boi
Als he sat up on hychte!
I wat he leuch quhille neirlye dede,
To se blynde Robenis plychte.

For the bulle gaed rounde, and the bulle gaed rounde
Blynde Robene with horryde dynne;
He hald neuir bene usit to stycke ane man,
And he knowit not how to begynne.

And he scraipit ane graif with his fore fute,
With many ane rowte and rayre;
And he borit the truff a thousand tymis
Arounde blynde Robenis layre.

Poor Robene hald but ane remeide,
Ane trembilyng houpe hald he;
He set his stokel horne to his muthe
And blewe yblastis thre.
"Quhat worme is this," then thochtis the bulle,
"That mockis my lofe and me?"

He shoke his heide, and he gaif ane prodde,
Quhille his hornis ranne to the brymme,
"I shall bore your bodie," thochtis the bulle,
"Throu the life-bloode and the limbe."

And out-throu, and out-throu blynde Robene
He hes maide his quhite hornis gae;
But they nouther touchit his skynne nor his bone,
But his coate and mantil greye.

And he has heivit up blynde Robene,
And tossit him lyke ane reide;
And aye he shoke his curlye powe,
To drive him from his heide.

And he wals in ane grefous frychte,
Yet wist not quhat to feire;
But he laye aerosse lyke ane ousen yoke,
Mervillyng quhat wals asteer.

But hald you sene the devilisch boi;
Ane ill deide mot he de!
He leuch until he tint all powris
Als he sat on his tre.

Then the bulle he gaif Robene ane toss
By some unchancie fling;
And ower the verge of the Bowman Lynne
He made the auld man to swing.

At firste he flew across the voyde,
Then downward sank lyke lede,
Till he fell into ane hazil boshe
Saft als ane fedder bedde.

And there he laye, and there he swung,
Als lychte als lefe on tre;
He knewe nochtis of his great daingere,
Nor yet of his safetye.

And the bulle he brullyit and he brooit,
Outower the Bowman Lynne,
And sore he yernit for life-bloode,
But dorste not venter in.

Poor Robene heirde the defenyng noisse,
And laye full sore aghast;
At length he raisit his forlorne houpe,
To charme him with ane blaste.

Quheneuir the bulle he heirde the soundis,
His aunger byrnit lyke helle,
And rounde the rock he raschit in raige,
But missit his fute and felle.

And downe the bank and downe the brae
He bumpit and he blewe;
And aye he stoattit fra the stonis,
And flapperit as he flewe.

He wals lyke ane mychtie terre barelle
Gawn bombyng down the steipe,
Quhille he plungit in the howe of the Bowman Lynne,
Full fiftie faddom deipe.

And the ekois claumb fra rocke to rocke,
Roryng the dark wode under,
And yollerit, yollerit, fra the hillis,
Lyke ane ryvyng clappe of thunder.

"Holloa! quhat's that?" cryit blynde Robene,
"Is there anie here to telle?"
"It is the bulle," quod the littil boi,
"You haif charmit him down to helle.

"The mychtie featis that you haif done,
This beatis them all to-daye!
Rise up, rise up, deire maistere mine,
I will guide you on your waye."

"Och Robene wals ane braife proude man
That day on Bowman brae,
And he braggit of that mornyngis featis
Until his dying dai.

And aye his quhite face glowit sublyme,
And aye his brente browe shone;
And thoche he tould ane store of les,
To helpe it there wals none.

He saide that he drewe the dapplit raeis
Fra out the dingillye delle,
The nut-browne hart, but and the hynde,
Downe fra the hedder belle;

And brochte the gaitis with their greye herdis,
Far fra the rockie glenne,
And the fairyis fra some plesaunt lande
That Robene did not kenne:

And then he tauld how he raisit the dede,
In their windyng shetis soe quhite,
And how the deuill came from his denne,
And lystenit with delyte:

How he brochte the Bulle of Norrowaye
Out-ower the sea-waife grene,
And charmit him downe to the pytte of helle,
Quhare he nefer more wals sene.

But then the false and wicked boi,
He nefer wolde allowe
That he charmit ouchtis but ane wicked bulle,
Quha tooke him for ane cowe.

Maye nefer poore mynstrelle wante the worde
That drawis the graitefulle teire,
Nor ane wayward brat his morning broz,
For both are harde to beire.

Moralitas.

Och, nefer bydde ane bad mynstrelle playe,
Nor seye his mynstrelsye,
Onlesse your wyne be in your hande,
And your ladye in your e'e.

Ane singil say will set him on,
And simpil is the spelle:
But he nefer will gif ofer againe,
Not for the deuill himselle.

A Lay of the Martyrs.

"Oh where have you been, bonnie Marley Reid!
For mony a long night and day
I have miss'd ye sair, at the Wanlock-head,
And the cave o' the Louther brae.

"Our friends are waning fast away,
Baith frae the cliff and the wood;
They are tearing them frae us ilka day;
For there's naething will please but blood.

"And, O bonnie Marley, I maun now
Gie your heart muckle pain.
For your bridegroom is a-missing too,
And 'tis fear'd that he is ta'en.

"We have sought the caves o' the Enterkin.
And the dens o' the Ballybough,
And a' the howes o' the Ganna linn;
And we wot not what to do."

KEELEY HALSWELLE DEL.

"Dispel your fears, good Marjory Laing,
And hope all for the best,
For the servants of God will find a place
Their weary heads to rest.

"There are better places, that we ken o',
And seemlier to be in,
Than all the dens of the Ballybough,
Or howes o' the Ganna linn.

"But sit thee down, good Marjory Laing,
And listen awhile to me,
For I have a tale to tell to you,
That will bring you to your knee.

"I went to seek my own dear James
In the cave o' the Louther brae,
For I had some things that of a' the world
He best deserved to hae.

"I had a kebbuck in my lap,
And a fadge o' the flour sae sma',
And a sark I had made for his buirdly back,
As white as the new-dri'en snaw.

"I sought him over hill and dale,
Shouting by cave and tree;
But only the dell with its eiry yell,
An answer return'd to me.

"I sought him up, and I sought him down,
And echoes return'd his name,
Till the gloffs o' dread shot to my heart,
And dirled through a' my frame.

"I sat me down by the Enterkin,
And saw, in a fearful line,
The red dragoons come up the path,
Wi' prisoners eight or nine:

"And one of them was my dear, dear James,
The flower of a' his kin;
He was wounded behind, and wounded before,
And the blood ran frae his chin.

"He was bound upon a weary hack,
Lash'd both by hough and heel,
And his hands were bound behind his back,
Wi' the thumbikins of steel.

"I kneel'd before that Popish band,
In the fervour of inward strife,
And I raised to heaven my trembling hand,
And begg'd my husband's life.

"But all the troop laugh'd me to scorn,
Making my grief their game;
And the captain said some words to me,
Which I cannot tell you for shame.

"And then he cursed our Whiggish race
With a proud and a scornful brow,
And bade me look at my husband's face,
And say how I liked him now.

"'Oh, I like him weel, thou proud captain,
Though the blood runs to his knee,
And all the better for the grievous wrongs
He has suffer'd this day frae thee.

"'But can you feel within your heart
That comely youth to slay?
For the hope you have in Heaven, captain,
Let him gang wi' me away!'

"Then the captain swore a fearfu' oath,
With loathsome jest and mock,
That he thought no more of a Whigamore's life
Than the life of a noisome brock.

"Then my poor James to the captain call'd,
And he begg'd baith hard and sair,
To have one kiss of his bonnie bride,
Ere we parted for evermair.

"'I'll do that for you,' said the proud captain,
'And save you the toil to-day,
And moreover, I'll take her little store,
To support you by the way.'

"He took my bountith from my lap,
And I saw, with sorrow dumb,
That he parted it all among his men,
And gave not my love one crumb.

"'Now, fare you well, my very bonnie bride,'
Cried the captain with disdain;
'When I come back to the banks of Nith,
I shall kiss you sweetly then.

"'Your heartiest thanks must sure be given,
For what I have done to-day—
I am taking him straight on the road to heaven;
And short will be the way!'

"My love he gave me a parting look,
And bless'd me fervently,
And the tears they mix'd wi' his purple blood,
And ran down to his knee."

"What's this I hear, bonnie Marley Reid?
How could these woes betide?
For blither you could not look this day,
Were your husband by your side.

"One of two things alone is left,
And dreadful the one to me;
For either your fair wits are reft,
Or else your husband's free."

"Allay your fears, good Marjory Laing,
And hear me out the rest;
You little ken what a bride will do,
For the youth she likes the best!

"I hied me home to my father's ha',
And through a' my friends I ran,
And I gather'd me up a purse o' gowd,
To redeem my young goodman:

"For I kenn'd the Papish lowns would weel
My fair intent approve;
For they'll do far mair for the good red gowd,
Than they'll do for heaven above.

"And away I ran to Edinburgh town,
Of my shining treasure vain,
To buy my James from the prison strong,
Or there with him remain.

"I sought through a' the city jails,
I sought baith lang and sair;
But the guardsmen turn'd me frae their doors,
And swore that he was not there.

"I went away to the Popish duke,
Who was my love's judge to be,
And I proffer'd him a' my yellow store,
If he'd grant his life to me.

"He counted the red gowd slowly o'er,
By twenties and by tens,
And said I had taken the only means
To attain my hopeful ends.

"'And now,' said he, 'your husband's safe;
You may take this pledge of me:
And I'll tell you, fair one, where you'll go,
To gain this certaintye,—

"'Gang west the street, and down the Bow,
And through the market place,
And there you will meet with a gentleman,
Of a tall and courteous grace;

"'He is clad in a livery of the green,
With a plume aboon his bree,
And arm'd with a halbert, glittering sheen:
Your love he will let you see.'

"O Marjory, never flew blithsome bird,
So light out through the sky,
As I flew up that stately street,
Weeping for very joy.

"Oh never flew lamb out-o'er the lea,
When the sun gangs o'er the hill,
Wi' lighter, blither steps than me,
Or skipp'd wi' sic good will!

"And aye I bless'd the precious ore,
My husband's life that wan;
And I even bless'd the Popish duke,
For a kind, good-hearted man.

"The officer I soon found out,—
For he could not be mistook;
But in all my life I never beheld
Sic a grim and a gruesome look.

"I ask'd him for my dear, dear James,
With throbs of wild delight,
And begg'd him in his master's name,
To take me to his sight.

"He ask'd me for his true address,
With a voice at which I shook;
For I saw that he was a Popish knave,
By the terror of his look.

"I named the name with a buoyant voice,
That trembled with ecstasye;
But the savage bray'd a hideous laugh,
Then turn'd and grinn'd at me.

"He pointed up to the city wall:
One look benumb'd my soul;
For there I saw my husband's head,
Fix'd high upon a pole!

"His yellow hair waved in the wind,
And far behind did flee,
And his right hand hang beside his cheek—
A waesome sight to see.

"His chin hang down on open space,
Yet comely was his brow,
And his eyne were open to the breeze—
There was nane to close them now!

"'What think you of your true love now?'
The hideous porter said;
'Is not that a comely sight to see,
And sweet to a Whiggish maid!'

"'Oh, haud your tongue, ye Popish slave,
For I downa answer you;
He was dear, dear to my heart before,
But never sae dear as now!

"'I see a sight you cannot see,
Which man cannot efface;
I see a ray of heavenly love
Beaming on that dear face.

"'And weel I ken yon bonnie brent brow,
Will smile in the walks on high,
And yon yellow hair, all blood-stain'd now,
Maun wave aboon the sky.'

"But can ye trow me, Marjory dear?
In the might of heavenly grace,
There was never a sigh burst frae my heart,
Nor a tear ran o'er my face.

"But I bless'd my God, who had thus seen meet
To take him from my side,
To call him home to the courts above,
And leave me a virgin bride."

"Alack, alack, bonnie Marley Reid,
That sic days we hae lived to see!
For siccan a cruel and waefu' tale
Was never yet heard by me.

"And all this time, I have trembling, ween'd,
That your dear wits were gone;
For there is a joy in your countenance,
Which I never saw beam thereon.

"Then let us kneel with humble hearts,
To the God whom we revere,
Who never yet laid that burden on,
Which he gave not strength to bear."

The Origin of the Fairies.

I have heard a wondrous old relation,
How the Fairies first came to our nation;
A tale of glamour, and yet of glee,
Of fervour, of love, and of mysterye.
I do not vouch for its certain truth,
But I know I believed it in my youth;
And envied much the enchanted knight,
Who enjoy'd such beauty and pure delight.
I will tell it now, and interlard it
With thoughts with which I still regard it,
And feelings with which first I heard it.

The Knight of Dumblane is a hunting gone,
With his hey! and his ho! and hallo!
And he met a merry maid alone,
In the light green and the yellow.
That maiden's eyes were the pearls of dew,
And her cheek the moss-rose opening new;
Her smile was the sun blink on the brae,
When the shower is past and the cloud away.
And then her form was so light and fair,
That it seem'd to lean on the ambient air;
So very blithesome and so boon,
That the knight was afraid it would fade too soon;
Mount on the ether from human ken,
Or melt away in the breeze of the glen.

His frame thrill'd to the very core
When he saw that beauty stand him before,
With the gleam of joy on her brow so meek,
And the dimple on her damask cheek;
And then so ripe was her honey lip,
That the wild bee, lingering, long'd to sip;
And the merle came by with an eye of guile,
For he hover'd and lighted down a while
On the snowy veil in which she was dress'd,
To pick the strawberries from her breast.
Oh was there aught below the heaven
I would not have done, or would not have given,
To have been the Knight of Dumblane that day!—
But-'twas better for me that I was away.

The knight came nigh, and essay'd to speak,
But the glamour of love was on his cheek;
And a single word he could not say,
For his tongue in thirsty silence lay.
But he doff'd his cap from his manly brow,
And he bow'd as low as a knight could bow,
Then stood with his velvet cap in hand,
As waiting for the maiden's command.

Sure this was witless as could have been:
I cannot conceive what the knight could mean;
For, had I been there, in right or wrong,
As sure as I sing you this song,
I would, as the most due respect,
Have twined my arms around her neck;
And, sure as man e'er woo'd a maid,
Have row'd her in my shepherd plaid,
And, in token of my high regard,
Have set her down on the flowery sward
And if some discourse had not begun,
Either in quarrel or in fun,
Take never a shepherd's word again,
And count my skill in wooing vain;
All this I would have done with speed--
But for ever would have rued the deed!

Oh, never was knight so far o'ercome,
As he who now stood blushing and dumb
Before this maid of the moorland brake,
With the cherub eye and the angel make.
At first no higher his glance was thrown
Than the flowery heath that her foot stood on;
When by degrees it embraced her toe,
But over the ankle durst not go;
Till at length he stammer'd out modestly,
"Pray—madam—have you—any commands for me?"

Shame fa' the knight! I do declare
I have no patience with him to bear;
For I would have look'd, as a man should do,
From the shoe tie to the glancing brow;
Nay, from the toe's bewitching station
Even to the organ of veneration.
For what avails the loveliest face,
Or form of the most bewitching grace,
Which on earth are made for man alone,
If they are not to be look'd upon?
Yes, I would have looked till my sight had rack'd,
And the very organs of vision crack'd;
And I would have sworn, as a man should swear,
That I never saw virgin half so fair:
This I had done, despite all pain,
But ah! I never had done it again!

But the maid was delighted beyond expression,
To mark the young knight's prepossession;
And with a smile that might have given
Some pangs even to a thing of heaven,
She took so moving a position
That set his soul in full ignition:
One limb alone scarce press'd the ground,
The other twined her ankle round;
Her lovely face was upward cast,
Her sunny locks waved in the blast;
And really she appear'd to be
A being divine—about to flee
Away from this world of self and sin,
A lovelier, holier clime to win.
No posture with that can ever compare—
What a mercy that I was not there!

But he raised his eyes as her's withdrew,
And of her form got one full view;

The taper limb, and the slender waist,
The modest mould of her virgin breast,
The lips just opening with a smile,
And the eye upraised to heaven the while;
The purple tides were seen to entwine
In a thousand veins all crystalline.
Enough! The sequence is too true:
For though the knight got but one view,
One full, intoxicating look,
It was more than his fond heart could brook;
For on the ground he fell, as dead
As he had been shot out through the head.

Now this was rather a sad o'erthrow:
I don't think I would have fallen so:
For though a lovely virgin face
Has sometimes put me in piteous case,
Has made me shed salt tears outright,
And sob like the wind on a winter night,
Nay, thrown me into a burning fever,
Yet I never just went off altogether;
But I have reason without a flaw
Thankful to be—and so I am—
That I was spared the illusive sight
That was seen by that enchanted knight.

Now it seems that the maiden to fear began
For the life of that young and comely man,
And every art essay'd, to try
To make him uplift his amorous eye;
But in reality, or in mime,
The swoon continued a weary time.
And better had it been if he had never
Re-open'd his eyes, but slept for ever;
For when next they awoke on the light of day,
His cheek on the maiden's bosom lay.
He felt its warmth new life impart,
And the gentle throbs of her beating heart;
He felt, beneath his aching head,
The enchanting mould that had laid him dead:
He felt her hand his temples chafing,
And every tenderness vouchsafing.
He lifted his head—he hid his face—
And stole his cheek from that witching place:
Yet still he cast, though disinclined,
A longing, lingering glance behind,
Where he saw—but I dare not describe the view,
For, if you are a man, it will kill you too:
If you are a woman, and lovely beside,
You will turn up your nose in disdain and pride.
If you are not, without a frown,
You will laugh at the knight till you fall down:
For true it is, when the knight had seen
The beauteous bed where his cheek had been,
The blush and the smile, and the lucid vein,
He gave one shriek, with might and main,
Then shiver'd a space, and died again!

From that time forth, if I durst tell,
Unto that knight such hap befell
As never was own'd by mortal man,
And never was told since tales began.
He got his wish—it proved a dear one:
It is an old story, and a queer one:
But free of fear, and free of fetter,
I'll tell it out even to the letter—
The wilder 'tis I love it the better.

We all have heard the maxim old,
That a tale of truth should aye be told;
For nothing in nature happen can
That may not a lesson prove to man:
Now this is true: yet things we ken,
Oft happen between the women and men,
So wild, romantic, and precarious,
So complicated and contrarious,
So full of passion and of pain,
They scarcely can bear to be told again.
Then think of love 'twixt a mortal creature,
And a being of another nature!

The knight was lost—that very morn
Rung the last peal of his hunting horn;
His comrades range the mountain reign,
And call his name, but call in vain;
From his hawks and his hounds he is borne away,
And lost for a twelvemonth and a day;
And, all that time, he lived but to prove
The new delights and the joys of love—
His mistress, a pattern of sweetness and duty,
And her home a palace of splendour and beauty.
But whether it was in the sinful clime
That bounds Mortality and Time,
In a land below or a land above,
In a bower of the moon or the star of love,
He never could fathom or invent,
Or the way that he came, or the way that he went;
But he ween'd, from his love's aërial nature,
That she barely could be a mortal creature.

And every night in his ears there rung
The accents sweet of the female tongue:
Light sounds of joy through the dome were ringing—
There was laughing, dancing, harping, singing:
But foot of man in the halls was none,
Nor sound of voice but his own alone:
While every night his beloved dame
In new array to his chamber came;
And, save herself, by day or night,
No other form ever met his sight.
So ween'd the knight; but his mind was shaken,
And, alas! how far he was mistaken!
For love's full overwhelming tide
O'er the mind of man is hard to bide.
Yet this full fraught of delirious joy,
Without reverse and without alloy,
I would once have liked to have essay'd
But at last—how I had been dismay'd!

The times soon changed; for, by slow decay,
The sounds of joy were melted away

To a tremulous strain of tender wailing
Of sufferings for a former failing;
While something was sung, in a plaintive key,
Of a most mysterious tendencye,
Of beings, who were not of the earth,
To human creatures giving birth;
Of seven pure beings of purity shorn;
Of seven babies that might be born,
The nurslings of another clime,
By creatures of immortal prime;
Of the mother's thrilling fears, and more
Of the dark uncertainty before!
The knight then dreaded—as well might he!—
That things were not as things should be:
And a hearty wish rose in his mind
That he were at the home he left behind.
To wish, and to have, in the charmed ring
Of that sweet dome, was the self-same thing;
For the knight awaken'd, as from a dream,
And he stood by the wild and mossy stream,
Where first he felt the bewitching power
Of the beauteous maid at the morning hour;
Where he fell a victim to beauty's charms,
And died of love in a virgin's arms!

He sought his halls and his stately bower:
But a solemn stillness seem'd to lower
Around his towers and turrets high;
His favourite hound would not come nigh,
But kept aloof, with a murmuring growl,
And a terror his heart could not control;
For he prick'd up his ears, and snuff'd the wind,
Though he heard his master's voice behind,
Then fled with his bristles of dread unfurl'd,
As from a thing of another world.
And every maiden, and every man,
Away from their master in terror ran:
While his aged mother, in weeds of woe,
Conjured him solemnly to go
Back to his grave, and his place of rest!
For her mind with terror was sore oppress'd.
But there he remain'd, and once again
Was hail'd as the true Knight of Dumblane.

But, oh! how changed in every feature,
And all the vehemencies of his nature,
As if an eagle from cliffs above
Had been changed into a plaintive dove:
From a knight of courage and of glee,
He was grown a thing of perplexitye,
Absent and moping, puling, panting,
A vacant gaze, and the heart awanting:
Earth had no pleasures for his eye,
When he thought of the joys that were gone by.
This to some natures may be genial,
Or, as a failing, counted venial;
For me, I judge the prudent way,
Let past time have been what it may,
Is to make the most, with thankful mind,
Of that which still remains behind.

The knight lived on as scarce aware,
How long I neither know nor care,
Till at the last, one lovely morn,
The fairest lady that ever was born
Came into his bower, with courtesy bland;
And a lovely boy was in either hand—
Two tiny elves, alike not less
Than twin flowers of the wilderness.

"Thou art my lord, my own true knight,
Whose love was once my sole delight.
Oh, I recall—how can I not?—
That morning, never to be forgot,
When I met thee first, with horn and hound,
Upon the moor, to the hunting bound,
When thy steed like lightning fled away,
And thy staghound howl'd and would not stay;
Thou stolest the heart that never had birth,
The heart of a being not of this earth:
And what is more, that heart to wring,
The virtue of an immortal thing.
Dost thou own these babes in the gold and green,
The loveliest twins that the world has seen;
Wilt thou here acknowledge us as thine own,
Or bear the brunt of our malison!"

Then the knight shed tears of joy apace
At seeing again that lovely face;
And his heart with love was sore oppress'd
As he folded the fair dame to his breast:
"Thou art my lady love," said he,
"And I never loved another but thee!"

"Alas, how blind are earthly eyes
To those that are lighted by other skies,
By other breezes, untainted by sin,
And by other spirits that dwell within!
Well might thy raptures of pleasures be
Sublimed by creatures such as we:"
The lady said, with an eye of shame,
When enter'd another most comely dame,
As like to the first as she could be,
As like as cherries on the same tree;
While hanging on either hand were seen
Two lovely babies in gold and green.

"Thou art my own true lord and love,"
The second said, "and thou wilt approve
This dear love-token I changed with thee,
When sitting in the bower upon thy knee."
The knight acknowledged the token rare,
And flew to embrace his lady fair:
But remembrance came with a thrilling pain
That, instead of one lady, he now had twain;
And instead of two babies of beauty and grace,
There were four all looking him in the face.
He stood like a statue, of sense bereft—
He look'd to the right and then to the left,
But one from the other he could not know;
They were both the same, and yet there were two.
While thus he stood prepared for shrift,
In came a third—a fourth—a fifth—

A sixth—a seventh! All round they stand,
And each had a baby in either hand—
And each had her love-tokens to display,
Which the knight acknowledged without delay.
But how that maid he met on the hill,
And loved so dearly, and loved her still,
Had thus the powers of nature outdone,
And multiplied into twenty and one—
Why, that was more than he could believe,
Than his head could frame, or his heart conceive;
And still he cast his eye to the door,
Distrustful that there were not more.

His lady mother at length attended,
And her courtesies were with wonder blended,
To see such beauty in such array,
Seven dames all lovely as morns of May,
With fourteen babies in a ring,
And all like the children of a king;
And she laid on her son her quick behests,
To tell her the quality of their guests.

"Why, mother, 'tis strange as strange can be,
And yet it is truth I tell to thee,
That all these dames of beauty so bright,
Claim me for their own true lord and knight:
Nay, and I may not deny it neither,
And all these children call me father!
But I swear by my vows of morn and even,
And I swear before the throne of heaven,
That I never knew of daughter nor son,
Nor of a love, save only one.
There is glamour abroad in moor and glen,
And enchantment in all the walks of men."

"Why, son, it has often been told to me,
That you never could learn to multiplye!
Your bold advancement now I greet;
It is practice that makes the man complete!"
This said, the dame, with a sullen smile,
And a gloom upon her brow the while;
For she soon perceived, by dint of lore,
That the Seven Weird Sisters stood her before,
Who had dwelt in enchanted bower sublime
From the ages of an early time;
Condemn'd for an unhallow'd love
Endless virginity to prove,
And endless longings for bliss to be,
In their palace of painful luxurye,
Unless a mortal knight should fall
In their love-snares, and wed them all.
And for all this numerous comely birth,
She knew that her son was lost to earth,
And perchance would be caught in enchantment's thrall,
And lost to heaven—the worst of all.

"My son," she said, "since so it be,
That all this comely progenye
Are here acknowledged to be thine—
Before they can be received as mine,
I have lock'd the doors, the gates, and all,
And here, within this stately hall,
They shall kneel before a sacred sign,
And be christen'd by a name divine."

Then a shriek arose from the lovely train—
Was never heard such a yell of pain—
Till the gorgeous ceiling that glow'd o'erhead
Was shiver'd like an autumn reed,
And the images all prostrate lay,
And the casements of the tower gave way,
And the lovely train, all three by three,
Walk'd forth in beauty and in glee;
While many a glance they cast behind,
As they trode the billows of the wind;
For they danced as lightly through the air
As if heaved on the gilded gossamer,
That play'd, with a soft and silent motion,
Like the gentlest swell that wooes the ocean;
And many an eye beheld them fly,
And heard this plaintive melody:

"Now we are free,
Now we are free,
We Seven Sisters now are free,
To fly where we long have wished to be!
And here we leave these babies of ours,
To dwell within our shady bowers,
And play their pranks in the moonlight dell,
With the human beings they love so well.
For oh, they are babies of marvellous birth,
They are neither of heaven nor yet of earth;
And whether they will live till time be done,
Or fade away in a beam of the sun,
Or mount on the polar heights sublime,
And to worlds of unknown splendour climb,
Is a mystery which no eye can pierce,
But His, the Lord of the universe:
But this we know,
That above or below,
By the doors of death they shall never go.

"Adieu, our sweet little babies, for ever!
Blithe be your lives, and sinful never;
You may play your pranks on the wicked and wild,
But wrong not Virtue's sacred child—
So shall your frolics be lightsome and boon,
On the bridge of the rainbow or beam of the moon;
And so shall your loves in the bridal bowers
Be sweeter still than your father's and ours;
And the breezes shall rock you to soft repose,
In the lap of the lily or breast of the rose;
And your beauty every eve renew,
As you bathe your forms in the fragrant dew
That stands a heavenly crystal bell
In the little dew-cup's lovely well.
Your drink be the haze on the moonlight rill,
And your food the odour which flowers distil,
And never let robes your forms adorn
That are not from the web of the rainbow shorn,

Or the purple and green that shines afar
In the breast of the eastern harvest star.
And then shall you ride
O'er land and o'er tide,
O'er cloud, and o'er foam of the firmament wide,
O'er tree and o'er torrent, o'er flood and o'er flame,
And THE FAIRIES shall be your earthly name.
In joy and in glee
Your revels shall be,
Till a day shall arrive that we darkly foresee;
But note you well when these times commence,
And prepare for your departure hence.

"When the psalms and the prayers are nightly heard
From the mossy cave or the lonely sward;
When the hunters of men rise with the sun,
And pursue their game till the day be done;
And the mountain burns have a purple stain
With the blood of men in the moorland slain;
And the raven croaks in the darksome cloud,
And the eagle yells in the heavens aloud,
We you command,
With heart and hand,
To leave the links of fair Scotland:
Away! dismiss!
And seek for bliss
In a happier, holier sphere than this!

"Sweet babies, adieu!
And may you never rue
The mingled existence we leave to you!
There is part of virtue and part of blame,
Part of spirit and part of flame,
Part of body and passion fell,
Part of heaven and part of hell.
You are babies of beauty and babies of wonder;
But fly from the cloud of the lightning and thunder,
And keep by the moonbeam or twilight gray,
For you never were made for the light of day.
Long may you amid your offspring dwell—
Babies of beauty, kiss and farewell!"

The Knight of Dumblane, from that day forth,
Never utter'd word upon the earth;
But moved about like a spirit in pain
For certain days, then vanish'd again;
And was chosen, as my old legend says,
The patriarch King of the Scottish Fays,
With full command o'er these beings strange;
But his human nature never would change,
Till, at the end of a thousand moons,
All deck'd with garlands and gay festoons,
He was borne away, with lament and yell,
And paid as kane to the Prince of Hell!

From such unhallow'd love as this,
With all its splendour and all its bliss,
Its end of terror and its bane,
May Heaven preserve us all!—Amen.

The P and the Q;

OR THE ADVENTURES OF JOCK M'PHERSON.

"There was an auld man, and he had an auld wife,
And they had a son was the plague of their life;"
For even frae the time when a bairn on the knee,
He was as contrary as callant could be.
He gloom'd and he skirl'd, and, when in hard case,
He whiles gae his mother a yerk on the face;
And nought sae weel pleased him, when he could win at her,
As to gar her mild gray een stand in back-water.
They scolded, they drubb'd him, they ruggit his hair,
They stripp'd off his claes, and they skelpit him bare—
But he took every chance baith to scart and to spar,
And instead o' growing better, he rather grew waur.

This old crabbed carle it is hard to make verse on:
His trade was a miller, his name was M'Pherson—
And this wicked callant, the plague o' his stock,
I ne'er heard his name, but I'm sure it was Jock—
For I never yet heard of a stripling of game,
The son of an auld pair, but Jock was his name.
I am sure that my mother had thirty old stories,
And every one of them began as before is;
Or, "there was a man and wife like other folk,
An' they had a son, an' they ca'd him Jock:"
And so it went on: now this that you're hearing
Was one of these stories—you'll find it a queer ane.

Jock went to the school—but there rose sic a rumpus!—
The scholars were maul'd, and their noddles grew bumpous;
The pretty wee girls were weel towzled and kiss'd,
In spite of their teeth, ay, and oft ere they wist;
But yet for as ill as the creatures were guided,
In Jock's fiery trials wi' him still they sided.
Good sauf's how they squeel'd in their feekless resistance!
Good sauf's, how the master ran to their assistance!
He ca'd Jock a heathen, a Turk, and a Nero,
Grinn'd, clench'd his auld teeth, and laid on like a hero:
But no mends could he get—for, despite of his sway,
Jock fought him again twenty times in a day.

Of course Jock's advancement in learning was slow,
He got with perplexity as far as O;
But the P and the Q, that sister and brother,
He wish'd at the deil, and he never wan further.

He hated the dominie's teasing and tattles—
He hated the school except for the battles—
But he liked the sweet wenches, and kindly caress'd them,
Yet when they would not let him kiss them, he thrash'd them.

There was ae bit shy lassie, ca'd Phemie Carruthers,
Whom he either lo'ed waur, or lo'ed better than others;
From morning to e'en you'd have heard or have seen them,
For peace there was never a moment between them;
She couldna bide frae him, he seem'd to bewitch her,
Yet neither wad she let him kiss her or touch her,
But squeel'd like a rabbit, and giggled and ran,
Till Jock ran her down, wi' a curse or a ban.
Then many a sair drubbing he gat frae her brothers;
Oh dear was his flirting wi' Phemie Carruthers!

The auld miller ken'dna what way to bestow him,
Or what in the world's wide range to make o' him;
For when at the mill, at the meadow, or mart,
He fought wi' the horses and coupit the cart;
He couldna even gang wi' the horse to the water,
But there was a battle, and gallop full blatter.
To a smith he was enter'd, to yirk at the stiddy,
But he lamed the auld smith, and he fired the smiddy.
Then went to a tailor of high estimation,
To learn to make trousers and breeks in the fashion,
But a' that the tailor could threaten or wheedle,
At every steek Jock gae 'm the length o' the needle.
Ten times in a day he provoked him or trick'd him,
Then ance for amusement he fought and he lick'd him;
So Snib turn'd him off, and accepted another,
And Jock went once more to his father and mother.

Then they sent him to sea, to efface his reproach,
In fighting the Spaniards, the French, and the Dutch:
Jock fought with them all, for he happen'd to hate them;
Whenever he met them, he fought, and he beat them;
He fought from his childhood, and never thought ill o't,
But then he acknowledged he whiles got his fill o't:
Of all naval heroes, our country had never,
Than this Jock M'Pherson, a truer or braver.
He fought thirty battles, and never retreated,
Round a' the hale world that God has created,
And for twenty long years, for ill or for well o't,
He never saw Britain, and seldom heard tell o't;
Yet never in life such resistance he knew,
Nor retreated, except from the P and the Q!

But the sights that Jock saw—oh, no man can conceive them!
They're really so grand, folks will hardly believe them.
He cross'd both the circles, which we're rather dark about,
He saw both the poles, which folk make sic a wark about;
And by a most rigid and laboursome scanning,
Not only the poles, but the sockets they ran in;
And also the giants, austere and outlandish,
That wheel'd the earth round, like a kirn on its standish:
They were cover'd with ice, and had faces most grievous,
And their forms were mis-shapen and huge as Ben-Nevis;
Yet they stood to their business, though fretting and gnarl'd,
With their cans of bear's grease for the poles of the world.
Let Barrow, and Parry, and Frank'lin commence
From this as example, and learn to speak sense.

Jock sailed where no Christian ever had been afore,
And found out some countries that never were seen afore;
He came to a land where the language they spoke
Had exactly the sound of the Scottish moor-cock,
With a ick-ick-ick, uck-uck-uck—ne'er was such din heard!
And instead of coming outward, their voices went inward.
He came to another, where young women wore
Their faces behind and their bottoms before;
Jock tried to embrace these maids once and again,
But the girls were confounded, and giggled amain—
For forward they fled in a moment, and smack
Jock came to the ground on the broad of his back;
Which makes me suspect—though I hate to asperse—
That their forms were like ours, but their clothes the reverse.
Pooh! Franklin's, and Hall's, and the whole are a mock,
Compar'd with the voyages and travels of Jock!
Jock sail'd up a branch of the Plate through the Andes;
He visited Lima, and Juan Fernandez;
Then spread all his canvas, and westward he ran,
Till he came to the shores of the famous Japan,
And an island beyond it, which Britons ne'er knew,
But Jock thought the natives pronounced it Cookoo:
The half of its wonders no history relates,
For its slates are all gold, and its money is slates!

* * * * * * *

Jock rose from a midshipman up to an admiral,
And now to that island for ever he bade farewell,
And sailed by a coast that had skies very novel;
The sun was an oblong, the moon was an oval,
And from the horizon midway up the skies,
The stars danced outrageously reels and strathspeys.
But none of the stars he remember'd were there,
He missed his old friends of the Serpent and Bear:
But those that they had were of brilliant adorning,
All bright as Dame Venus, the star of the morning;
At midnight there glowed out a radiance within them,
As the essence of light and its spirit were in them,
Till even the rude sailors with awe looked upon them,
As if a light sacred and heavenly shone on them.

One ship and one crew (a bold and uncanny one)
At first sailed with Jock from the Mediterranean;
But now everything was with him *sesquialter*,
As proudly he passed by the bay of Gibraltar.
He returned a commander, accomplished and nautical;
It is true, some suspected his conduct piratical;
But Jock from such chances and charges got well off,
For they happened so distant they ne'er were heard tell of.
He had as much good money—gold, silver, and copper—
As filled to the brim his old father's mill-hopper;
Two ships and a frigate, all trim and untented—
Such feats and such fortune are unprecedented!

Jock bought his old father the lands of Glen-Wharden,
The old wicked dominie a house and a garden;
And all his school-fellows that thrashed him a-going it,
He gave them large presents, and blessed them for doing it;
Then took for his lady, in preference to others,
The wild little skelpie called Phemie Carruthers.
But he swore that through life he had never been stopp'd
By Christian or Pagan with whome'er he coped;
By all the wild elements roused to commotion,
The roarings of storm, and the rollings of ocean;
Wild currents and mountains of icicles blue,
Except the two bouncers, the P and the Q!!
"And blast my two eyes!" Jack would swear and would say,
"If I do not believe to this here blessed day,
That the trimmers were nothing for all the kick-up just,
Than a B and a D with their bottoms turn'd upmost!"

The Spirit of the Glen.

"O dearest Marjory, stay at home,
For dark's the gate you have to go;
And there's a maike adown the glen,
Hath frighten'd me an' many moe.

"His legs are like to pillars tall,
And still and stalwart is his stride;
His face is rounder nor the moon,
And och, his mouth is awesome wide!

"I saw him stand the other night,
Yclothed in his grizly shroud;
With one foot on a shadow placed,
The other on a misty cloud.

"As far asunder were his limbs,
On the first storey of the air,
A ship could have sail'd through between,
With all her colours flying fair.

"He nodded his head against the heaven,
As if in reverend mockerye;
Then fauldit his arms upon his breast,
And aye he shook his beard at me.

"And he pointed to my Marjory's cot,
And by his motions seem'd to say,
'In yon sweet home go seek thy lot,
For there thine earthly lot I lay.'

"My very heart it quaked for dread,
And turn'd as cold as beryl stone;
And the moudies cheipit below the swaird,
For fear their little souls were gone.

"The cushat and the corbie craw
Fled to the highest mountain height;
And the little birdies tried the same,
But fell down on the earth with fright.

"But there was ane shameful heronshew
Was sitting by the plashy shore,
With meagre eyne watching powheads,
And other fishes, less or more;

"But when she saw that grizly sight
Stand on the billow of the wind;
Grace!—as she flapper'd and she flew,
And left a streamoury track behind!

"And aye she rair'd as she were wud,
For utter terror and dismay;
And left a skelloch on the clud—
I took it for the milky way.

"Had I not seen that hideous sight,
What I had done I could not say;
But at that heron's horrid fright,
I'll laugh until my dying day.

"Then, dearest Marjory, stay at home,
And rather court a blink with me;
For gin you see that awesome sight,
Yourself again you will never be."

"But I have made a tryst this night,
I may not break, if take my life:
So I will run my risk and go;
With maiden, spirits have no strife.

"Have you not heard, Sir Dominie,
That face of virgin bears a charm.
And neither ghaist, nor man, nor beast,
Have any power to do her harm?"

"Yes, there is One, sweet Marjorye,
Will stand thy friend in darksome even;
For virgin beauty is on earth
The brightest type we have of heaven.

"The collie cowers upon the swaird,
To kiss her foot with kindly eye:
The maskis will not move his tongue,
But wag his tail, if she pass by;

"The adder hath not power to stang;
The slow-worm's harmless as an eel;
The burly toad, the ask, and snake,
Cannot so much as wound her heel.

"The angels love to see her good,
And watch her ways in bower and hall;
The devils pay her some respect,
And God loves her—that's best of all."

"Then, sooth, I'll take my chance, and wend
To keep my tryst, whate'er may be;
Why should a virtuous maiden dread,
The tale of a crazy dominie?"

"Ochon, ochon, dear Marjorye,
But of your virtue you are vain!
Yet you are in a wondrous haste,
In running into toil and pain.

"For maiden's virtue, at the best,
(May He that made her kind forgive her!)
Is like the blue-bell of the waste,
Sweet, sweet a while, and gone for ever!

"It is like what maiden much admires—
A bruckle set of china store;
But one false stumble, start, or step,
And down it falls for evermore!

"It is like the florid Eden rose,
That perisheth without recalling;
And aye the lovelier that it grows,
It wears the nearer to the falling.

"It is like the flaunting morning sky,
That spreads its blushes far before;
But plash, there comes a storm of rain,
And all its glory then is o'er.

"Then be not proud, sweet Marjorye,
Of that which hath no sure abode;
Man little knows what lurks within;
The heart is only known to God."

But Marjory smiled a willsome smile,
And drew her frock up to her knee;
And lightly down the glen she flew,
Though the tear stood in the dominie's e'e.

She had not gone a mile but ane,
Quhill up there starts a droichel man,
And he lookit ruefully in her face,
And says, "Fair maid, where be you gaun?"

"I am gaun to meet mine own true love,
So, Maister Brownie, say your rede;
I know you have not power to hurt
One single hair of virgin's head."

The brownie gave a gousty laugh,
And said, "What wisdom you do lack!
For, if you reach your own true love,
I may have power when you come back!"

Then next she met an eldrin dame,
A weirdly witch I wot was she;
For though she wore a human face,
It was a gruesome sight to see.

"Stay, pretty maid, what is your haste?
Come, speak with me before you go,
For I have news to tell to you
Will make your very heart to glow:

"You claim that virgins have a charm,
That holds the universe at bay;
Alas! poor fool, to snare and harm
There is none so liable as they.

"It is love that lifts up woman's soul,
And gives her eyes a heavenly sway;
Then, would you be a blessed thing,
Indulge in love without delay.

"You go to meet your own true love,
I know it well as well can be;
But or you pass a bowshot on,
You will meet ane thrice as good as he.

"And he will press your lily hand,
And he will kiss your cheek and chin,
And you must go to bower with him,
For he is the youth your love must win.

"And you must do what he desires,
And great good fortune you shall find;
But when you reach your own true love,
Keep close your secret in your mind."

Away went Marjory, and away
With lighter step and blither smile;
That night to meet her own true love,
She would have gane a thousand mile.

She had not pass'd a bowshot on,
Until a youth, in manly trim,
Came up, and press'd the comely May
To turn into a bower with him.

He promised her a gown of silk,
A mantle of the cramosye,
And chain of gold about her neck,
For one hour of her companye.

He took her lily hand in his,
And kiss'd it with such fervencye,
That the poor May began to blush,
And durst not lift her modest e'e.

Her little heart began to beat,
And flutter most disquietlye;
She lookit east, she lookit west,
And all to see what she could see.

She lookit up to heaven aboon,
Though scarcely knowing how or why;
She heaved a sigh—the day was won,
And bright resolve beam'd in her eye.

The first stern that she look'd upon,
A tear stood on its brow for shame;
It drappit on the floor of heaven,
And aye its blushes went and came.

Then Marjory in a moment thought,
That blessed angels might her see;
And often said within her heart,
"Do God's own planets blush for me?

"That they shall never do again—
Leal virtue still shall be my guide:—
Thou stranger youth, pass on thy way,
With thee I will not turn aside.

"The angel of the glen is wroth,
And where shall maiden find remede?
See what a hideous canopy
He is spreading high above our head!"

"Take thou no dread, sweet Marjorye;
It is love's own curtain spread on high;
A timeous veil for maiden's blush,
Yon little crumb-cloth of the sky.

"All the good angels take delight
Sweet woman's happiness to see;
And where could thine be so complete
As in the bower this night with me?"

Poor Marjory durst no answer make,
But stood as meek as captive dove;
Her trust fix'd on her Maker kind—
Her eyes upon the heaven above.

That wicked wight (for sure no youth,
But demon of the glen was he)
Had no more power, but sped away,
And left the maiden on her knee.

Then all you virgins sweet and young,
When the first whisperings of sin
Begin to hanker on your minds,
Or steal into the soul within,

Keep aye the eyes on heaven aboon,
Both of your body and your mind;
For in the strength of God alone,
A woman's weakness strength shall find.

And when you go to bower or dell,
And know no human eye can see,
Think of an eye that never sleeps,
And angels weeping over thee.

For man is but a selfish maike,
And little recks of maiden's woe,
And all his pride is to advise
The gate she's far ower apt to go.

Away went bonnie Marjorye,
With all her blossoms in the blight;
She had not gone a bowshot on,
Before she saw an awesome sight:

It was ane maike of monstrous might,
The terror of the sons of men;
That by Sir Dominie was hight,
The Giant Spirit of the Glen.

His make was like a moonshine cloud
That filled the glen with human form:
With his gray locks he brush'd the heaven,
And shook them far aboon the storm;

And gurly, gurly was his look,
From eyne that seem'd two borels blue;
And shaggy was his silver beard
That down the air in streamers flew.

Oh, but that maid was hard bested,
And mazed and modderit in dismay!
For both the guests of heaven and hell
Seem'd her fond passage to belay.

When the great spirit saw her dread,
And that she wist not what to say,
His face assumed a milder shade,
Like midnight melting into day.

"Poor wayward, artless, aimless thing,
Where art thou going, canst thou tell?"
The spirit said—"Is it thy will
To run with open eyne to hell?

"I am the guardian of this glen,
And 'tis my sovereign joy to see
The wicked man run on in sin,
Rank, ruthless, gaunt, and greedilye;

"But still to guard the virtuous heart
From paths of danger and of woe,
Shall be my earnest, dearest part:
Then tell me, dame, where dost thou go?"

"I go to meet mine ain dear love,
True happiness with him to seek—
The comeliest and kindest youth
That ever kiss'd a maiden's cheek."

The spirit shook his silver hair,
That stream'd like sunbeam through the rain;
But there was pity in his eyne,
Though mingled with a mild disdain.

He whipp'd the maid up in his arms
As I would lift a trivial toy:
Quod he, "The upshot thou shalt see
Of this most pure and virtuous joy!"

He took two strides, he took but two,
Although ane mile it seem'd to be,
And show'd the maid her own true love,
With maiden weeping at his knee;

And oh! that maiden's heart was sore,
For still with tears she wet his feet:
But then he mock'd and jeer'd the more,
With threats, and language most unmeet.

She cried, "Oh, dear and cruel youth,
Think of the love you vow'd to me,
And all the joys that we have proved,
Beneath the bield of birken tree!

"Since never maid hath loved like me,
Leave me not to the world's sharp scorn;
By your dear hand I'll rather die,
Than live forsaken and forlorn!"

"As thou hast said so shalt thou dree,"
Said this most cursed and cruel hind;
"For I must meet ane May this night,
Whom I love best of womankind;

"So I'll let forth thy wicked blood,
And neither daunt nor rue the deed,
For thou art lost to grace and good,
And ruin'd beyond all remede."

She opened up her snowy breast,
And aye the tear blinded her e'e;
Now take, now take mine harmless life,
All guiltless but for loving thee!"

Then he took out a deadly blade,
And drew it from its bloody sheath,
Then laid his hand upon her eyne,
To blind them from the stroke of death.

Then, straight to pierce her broken heart,
He raised his ruthless hand on high;
But Marjory utter'd shriek so loud,
It made the monster start and fly.

"Now, maiden," said the mighty shade,
"Thou see'st what dangers waited thee;
Thou see'st what snares for thee were laid,
All underneath the greenwood tree.

"Yet straight on ruin wouldst thou run!
What think'st thou of thy lover meek—
The comeliest and the kindest youth
That ever kiss'd a maiden's cheek?"

Then sore, sore did poor Marjory weep,
And cried, "This world's a world of woe,
A place of sin, of snare, and gin;
Alas! what shall poor woman do?"

"Let woman trust in heaven high,
And be all ventures rash abjured;
And never trust herself with man,
Till of his virtue well assured."

The spirit turned him round about,
And up the glen he strode amain,
Quhill his white hair along the heaven
Stream'd like the comet's fiery train.

High as the eagle's morning flight,
And swift as is his cloudy way,
He bore that maiden through the night,
Enswathed in wonder and dismay;

And he flang her in the dominie's bed—
Ane good soft bed as bed could be;
And when the dominie he came home,
Ane richt astounded man was he!

Quod he, "My dear sweet Marjorye,
My best beloved and dawted dame,
You are welcome to my bed and board,
And this brave house to be thine hame;

"But not till we in holy church
Be bound, never to loose again;
And then I will love you as my life,
And long as life and breath remain."

Then the dominie took her to holy church,
And wed her with a gowden ring;
And he was that day a joyful man,
And happier nor a crowned king.

And more unsmirchit happiness
Ne'er to an earthly pair was given;
And all the days they spent on earth,
They spent in thankfulness to Heaven.

Now, maidens dear, in greenwood shaw,
Ere you make trystes with flattering men,
Think of the sights poor Marjory saw,
And the GREAT SPIRIT OF THE GLEN.

The Field of Waterloo,

AND DEATH-BED PRAYER OF A SOLDIER.

The eventful day had come and gone,
And the night in majesty drew on;
For just as the twilight shed a ray
On the plains of Belgium west away,
The eastern heaven was all o'erspread
With a veil of high and murky red;
And there was awe in the soldier's eye,
Whenever it met that lurid sky,
For he thought, as he lifted his visage swarth,
There was blood on the heaven, and blood on the earth.

The day was past, the fateful day,
The pride of the tyrant prostrate lay;
And the battle-clang, and the trumpet's tone,
Were rolling to the southward on,
When a war-worn soldier far behind
On the verge of a rising height reclined;
A wounded hero, of courage true,
Who of his deadly wound not knew;
For he weened the blood that swathed him so,
The blood of a proud and hateful foe;
And much he marvelled why he lay
Thus faint and weary by the way.

Though round his form the tartans hung,
Yet his tall mould and Doric tongue

Bespoke his lineage from the scene
Of crystal rill and mountain green;
From that fair land of warlike fame
Where Douglas fought and overcame;
The land of forays, feuds, and plots,
Of Elliots and of valiant Scotts;—
That Border land, so nobly blent
With hill, and dale of green extent,
With camp, and tower, and battlement.

That is a land, full well 'tis known,
Where cottage maid and matron brown,
Where shepherd boy or peasant elf,
Reads, thinks, and judges for himself.
Deep there of Heaven's awards the sense,
And trust in sacred Providence;
The old, the young, deep reverence pay
To God's own blessed and holy day;
'Tis there, by hamlet and by hill,
A day of holy resting still.

There had our soldier spent his youth
In ways of happiness and truth,
Till scorn cast from a maiden's eye
Drove him in distant fields to die.
Now on that height he lay forlorn,
Where Gallia's troops, at break of morn,
Did first with ready wheel combine,
And form the mighty crescent line:
And then he saw, and heard, and felt
The dire effects of human guilt.
Oh, such a day of dole and pain
May human nature ne'er again
Behold, while earth and heaven remain!

Soon as the gloaming drew her screen
Over the red and rueful scene,
Then every moan was heard as near,
And every plaint fell on the ear:
The parting throb, the smothered sigh,
And shriek of sharpest agony:
But every anathema said
By widowed dame and weeping maid,
Or passed in soldier's dying groan,
All cursed one, and one alone.
All tongues and languages were blent,
But all was sorrow and lament—
Or weeping for the valiant dead,
Or curses on a tyrant's head.

Our soldier raised him from the sod,
And lifting up his eyes to God,
He leaned upon his bloody wrist,
And cried aloud, with throbbing breast:
"Oh grant, thou Being all divine,
Such load of guilt be never mine,
As his—that scourge of human life,
Who flies inglorious from the strife:
For since the fields of war were seen,
Such desolation hath not been.
Thou knowest why; thy will be done:
Blessed be thy name, the field is won!"

As thus he said, there by him stood
Two strangers tall, of gentle mood;
Soldiers they were, or late had been,
And many a bloody field had seen:
One was from Prussia's forests wide,
And one from Wolga's stormy side:
Their message done, they paused to view
The havoc done on Waterloo.

"Soldier," they said, "why liest thou thus,
As all were peace and quietness?
Such deeds you Scots have ne'er achieved,
Since Wallace fought and Douglas reaved.
Swift flies the foe as flies the wind;
There's fame before, and spoil behind;
O soldier, it befits thee ill
To rest like hind upon the hill."

"Sore am I grieved, but toil severe,
And drowsy faintness keep me here;
My soul is burning to pursue,
And fain would move from Waterloo;
For such a din my ear assails
Of piteous plaint, and dying wails,
Methinks it would be perfect bliss
To be in any place but this!"

"Peace to thy heart, brave soldier:—say
How think'st thou of this wondrous day?"

"How think I?"—From the dust he reared
His ghastly cheek with blood besmeared:
"How think I? By this heart forlorn,
An oath I ne'er before have sworn,
I think, that first since human guilt
Provoked to war, and blood was spilt
In battle field, beneath the sun
Such doughty deeds were never done,
So boldly fought, so bravely won.
Nay, pardon me; in ardour hot
My darling theme I had forgot,
But sure, of earthly well-fought fields,
To Bannockburn alone it yields."

The bold Silesian smiled in spite,
He thought of Leipsic's bloody fight;
The Russian cast a glance of flame,
But Borodino scorned to name.

"Soldier," they said, "thou sawest the strife:
Say, sooth, in all thy by-past life
Hast thou not seen, nor read, nor heard
Of ought with this to be compared?"

"I could compare 't with cloud of morn,
Fleet on the whirlwind's eddies borne,
That, melting denser folds of rain,
Rebounding bursts, and wheels again.
I might compare it with the force
Of mountain river's roaring course,
And one small mound raised in its way,
To bear its whole resistless sway,
Which firmly stemmed the whelming tide,
That foamed, and fled to either side.

I could compare 't to ocean's roar
Against the adamantine shore.
But in all ages that shall spring,
When man shall tell, or poet sing,
Of what he would the most impress
Upon the heart with powerfulness;
Of nature's terrors in the cloud,
The tempest's rage, the roaring flood,
Or lightning bursting on the view,
He'll liken it to Waterloo.
I saw it: but to me it seems
A train of long-past hideous dreams,
Of things half known and half forgot,
I know not whether seen or not.
E'er since I bore the onset's shock,
And was involved in fire and smoke,
I've had no knowledge what hath been,
Nor thought, nor mind—a mere machine.
I only viewed it as my meed,
To stand or fall, as Heaven decreed;
For honour's cause to do my best,
And to the Almighty leave the rest.
Blessed be his hand that swayed the fight
For mankind's and for freedom's right!

"Glancing along our Scottish files,
I marked our foemen's powerful wiles,
And scarcely weened that we could stand
Against such odds of spear and brand;
Of harnessed horse, in column deep,
And red artillery's wasting sweep;
Yet only closed fast as we fell,
Without one thought but to repel.
O Scotia, land of old renown,
Thy prowess yet is never known—
I glory that thou art mine own!

"Methinks I hear, in after time,
The hamlet song in rustic rhyme,
Wove by some shepherd of the dale
Where first I breathed the mountain gale,
And listed first the magic lore
Which I, alas! shall hear no more;
Telling of deeds that here were wrought,
What heroes fell, what lions fought,
Till all the striplings stare and sigh,
With round tears dropping from the eye,
Begging again to hear the song,
Though homely be the rhyme and long.

"Oh might my name but mentioned be
In land of my nativity,
How would my parting spirit joy,
And spring from earth without alloy!
Yes, I will hope that men shall tell
Of all our deeds, and fondly dwell
On every humble soldier's name
That stood on this day's list of fame,
And at the call of morning roll,
Was blotted from the bloody scroll.

"Of Wellesley these songs shall tell;
And how the gallant Picton fell;
And how the lancer's steady eye
Aimed to the heart of Ponsonby.
O Ponsonby, the brave, the just,
A soldier sorrows o'er thy dust!

"Ah me! The last time e'er I strayed,
Like hermit in my native glade,
I followed him o'er mountain gray
With Border chief of mighty sway,
The heathfowl from the moor to spring,
And lower the blackcock on the wing:
Then blithe his heart; he little knew
Of such a fate at Waterloo!

"Yet sooth he might, for he heard tell
Of propheey remembered well.
'Twas a weird dame his fate that read,
The shepherd's and the maiden's dread.
What's this? Ah, well may I repine!
For with his death she coupled mine:
And though in wrath she us assailed,
Yet what she says hath never failed.

"'Avaunt,' she cried, 'thou droich of three!
Thou'rt nought in life; nor thou, nor he,
But passing shadows—a mere blot!
Men trowed it was, but it is not.
But mark me, there is thee before
A hideous flood, a tideless shore,
From which a wolf shall turn and run,
An eagle fall, and a harper won:
Then down shall sink an angel grim,
But falling, you shall fall with him.
On such an eve of such a day
Thou shalt remember what I say!'

"Ah me! who can his fate control?
That sibyl's words now shake my soul.
That very day, and hour, she knew
Of this day's doom at Waterloo.
Oh, pardon me! I sink aghast
At memory of some visions past.
My doom is sealed, here I must bow
To death's arrest, I know not how."

"Soldier, take heart, and be advised,
In time to come whene'er thou try'st
Of this day's deeds to take the sum,
Of Leipsic think, and then be dumb!"

"Or heard'st thou ne'er of Moscow's flame?
Nor Borodino's chilling name,
Where slaughtered myriads only gave
New ardour to the living brave?
I saw at morn proud Moscow stand
The glory of our northern land,
With gilded spires and turrets blent
That pierced the yielding firmament;
But ere the midnight watch was o'er
The ancient Moscow was no more.

"I saw, through weary wastes of snow,
Thousands of hopeless journeyers go,
O'er all the forests wandering wide,
Without a home their heads to hide.
I saw the babe oft hushed to rest
On mother's agonized breast,
But long ere day that breast beloved
The death-bed of its darling proved;
There did they rest, in death laid low,
Their grave the drifted wreath of snow.

"I saw the stripling, worn and bent,
Halting and crying as he went,
Straining his eyes o'er flood and field,
Loath his young life so soon to yield:
Weak grew his plaint, his motion slow,
I saw the blood-drops on the snow,
And glad was I, his sufferings o'er,
When down he sunk to rise no more.

"On message sent, I crossed in haste,
Kaluga's northmost dreary waste,
Where many a maiden's youthful form
Had sunk beneath the ruthless storm.
I saw the beauteous taper limb,
That made the winter wreath look dim;
The young, the fair, half-moulded breast,
That icicles even gentlier pressed!
The whole so pure, and stretched so low,
Seemed but some mould of lovelier snow.
Though all was lost that life held dear,
And all was suffered mind could bear,
Yet not a plaint was heard to fall;
Our country and our cause was all:
Now, soldier, has that land of thine
Done half, or suffered half of mine?

"On Borodino not alone
The dying and the dead were strewn;
The tyrant's route was tracked in blood
From Moscow's gate to Niemen's flood;
Far as could reach the roving eye
O'er lands that waste and open lie,
I saw myself, and marked it well,
The snow-flakes redden as they fell.
The drifted wreathes were purpled o'er,
Crusted and gorged with human gore,
While o'er them rose a forest dim
Of horses' hoof and human limb.

"Soldier, I tell thee, though I love
Thy ardour, and thy zeal approve,
If thou hast seen no field like this,
Thou know'st not yet what warfare is.

"Say of my country what you will,
And call us rude and savage still;
I'll say't to Europe and to thee,
Though left alone, we dared be free,
And stood for death or liberty.

"Yes, Europe cringed to tyrant's might;
'Twas we who turned the scale of right;
'Twas we who bruised the monster's head;
The Germans joined to make him bleed.
What have you Britons done t' avail,
By this defence and bold assail,
But only crushed the severed tail?"

"And might I judge from what I saw,
I would this simple inference draw—
Had it not been *our* brave Bulow,
This had to them been day of woe,
And ended in their overthrow."

"What! Veteran Britons overthrown
Led on by warlike Wellington?—
No! Who can brow the heaven with me
So proud a claim to verify?
They never were. If one knows when,
Let him talk of it—not till then.

"But cease, my friends, this poignant strain,
For friends we are, and must remain.
I too might say, in scorn and pride,
With fair pretext upon my side,
That during Russia's vaunted plea,
She only fought to turn and flee;
And feebly still the strife renewed,
Till Heaven fought, then she pursued.

"And I might say of Prussia's boast,
'Tis right equivocal at most;
Her head she raised with martial show,
But stooped the lowest of the low;
Dragged on her chain of galling steel,
And followed at the tyrant's heel;
But when the royal beast grew lame,
Then turned the ass, his bulk to maim.
This I might say with courtesy,
For such the taunts you cast on me;
But hard it sounds from friendship's mouth,
To those who list to learn the truth.

"In that sweet dale where I was born,
Where green Mount Benger greets the morn,
It is our wont, on either side
Reason to hear, and then decide;
So let us now. For I will stand
By the honour of my native land,
While I have tongue t' assert her right,
Or foot to move, or hand to fight.

"I then allow of what befell,
You fought the foe, and fought him well:
You fought for home, you fought for life,
For monarch, kinsmen, children, wife;
For very name and being's sake:
Say was not then your all at stake?"

"All was at stake; religion, fame,
Nay, more than human tongue can name."

"The less your merit and your meed,
'Twas desperation did the deed;
And where's the creature forced to strife
That will not fight for breath and life?

The hunted deer can hold at bay
The gallant hound—yet who will say
The deer is brave, or yeaning ewe
That drives the fox along the dew!
There is no beast of hill or wood
That will not fight to save its brood:
So that the man who shuns such strife,
Is less than ought in brutal life:
Such is the model of your fame,
And such the honours you can claim.

"But Britain lay secure and free,
Encircled by her guardian sea,
Her flag of sovereignty unfurled
In every bay that cleaves the world:
One cause alone had she to fight—
The glorious cause of human right,
And for that prize to her endeared,
The cause of freedom, long revered,
Where is the foe, say if you can,
That e'er has braved us man to man!
And be the leader's name revealed,
That e'er has driven us from the field.

"High be your deeds to your own thought;
To fight for life I count it nought.
But he who, seeing friend o'erthrown
By sordid guile, and trodden down,
Flies to his aid, and ventures all
At friendship's and at honour's call;
And, by his blood and jeopardy,
Succeeds, and sets the injured free—
This, this, I say, is bravery!"

The Russian turned his sullen eye,
His silent comrade's mood to spy,
And saw him bent in thought profound,
Moulding wide figures on the ground:
"By heaven!" he cried, as up he threw
His manly eyes of azure blue,
"What the Scots soldier says is true!"

When this assent our soldier heard,
He moaned and stretched him on the sward;
He felt the sand of life near run,
And deemed the day now doubly won.
The strangers friendly aid impart,
Give him to drink, and cheer his heart,
Then down they sat, on converse keen,
Beneath the heaven's own starry sheen.

The Prussian was a stoic cool,
Of Voltaire's and of Frederick's school;
And much he said in earnest way,
Of things unfitting poet's lay:
Of needful waste of human kind;
Of mankind's late enlightened mind;
How nations first bowed to the yoke;
How furiously the bonds they broke;
And how the soul arose in might,
Grasping its own eternal right.

"The time," said he, "is ever gone
That Europe dreads tyrannic sway;
No more we'll toil in error on,
Groping at noon to find our way.
It was the love of freedom, given
To man as his prerogative—
That sacred thing conferred by heaven,
The noblest gift that it could give—
'Twas that which made the tyrant rise,
Made kings and kingdoms to divide;
He came with words of specious guise,
The hearts of men were on his side.
Oh, he might conquer idiot kings,
These bars in nature's onward plan!
But fool is he the yoke that flings
O'er the unshackled soul of man!
'Tis like a cobweb o'er the breast,
That binds the giant while asleep;
Or curtain hung upon the east,
The day-light from the world to keep:
The giant wakes in all his might;
The light of heaven is unconfined;
And man asserts his primal right—
Thanks to the unconquerable mind!"

The Russian said, it was not so;
What *mind* could do he did not know;
'Twas God, the Russian's guard and guide,
And Alexander, turned the tide.
If these were part of mind or soul,
Then that might rule and rein the whole.

The Scottish soldier raised his eye
As if about to make reply,
But faint from weariness and pain,
He moaned, and laid him down again.
The strangers raised him from the ground;
They searched, and found a mortal wound:
"Alas!" they said, "thou gallant youth;
Thou friend to loyalty and truth,
What shall be done some help to give!
For short the date thou hast to live."

"And is it so?" said he, "I knew
The sibyl's saying would prove true.
Heaven's will be done! Take ye no heed;
I meet without dismay or dread
Man's last great foe—a welcome guest;
I know him conquered like the rest.
One last request I have to make—
For my departing spirit's sake.
Kneel here, before the eye divine,
A dying soldier's prayer to join."

The strangers readily agreed,
Saying, they wished no higher meed;
For though from far and foreign parts,
Yet they were men of gentle hearts.
They kneeled amid the ensanguined scene,
Beneath the midnight heaven serene,
While the young gallant soldier lay
Prostrate along the bloody clay;

And as a taper's wasting light
In its last glimmer shines more bright,
So was his soul aroused to share,
High energies in his last prayer.

"O thou of existence the fountain and head,
The God of the living, and God of the dead;
This world is thine, and the starry frame—
The Lord Jehovah is thy name.
How shall I come my vows to pay?
What offering on thine altar lay?
Alas, my God! if e'er thine eyes
Accepted earthly sacrifice,
I bring the last that man can bring;
I am *myself* that offering:
And here I cry from the altar of death,
From the tabernacle of thy wrath,
'Mid the cries and the groans of the human race:
Oh hear in heaven thy dwelling-place!

"Though, hid in mystery, none can pierce
Thy reign of the ample universe:
Yet he who owns not thy hand alone,
In the high events that have come and gone,
Deserves not to possess of thee
The power of the reasoning faculty.

"When the destroyer left his throne,
To brave the eye of the frigid zone,
Was there a human head could guess
Or count on probable success?
Or was there a way in nature's course
So to o'erwhelm that cumbrous force,
Which strove the nations to enchain,
Or rouse them from their torpor again?
Thy bolts of wrath thou might'st have driven,
Or loosed the artillery of heaven;
Or, as just guerdon of offence,
Sent forth the wasteful pestilence:
But not in nature's wide command,
(And nature ever is thy hand),
Was other way so to destroy
That armed horde, the world's annoy.

"Yes, still as the northern patriot bled,
When the Russian eagles turned and fled,
Thy arm was seen in the foemen's wrath
That hurried them on to the bourn of death.
When first Iberia spurned the yoke
The judgment was set, and the seals were broke;
But when the city of sacred fame
Enwrapt the northern heaven in flame,
Their sentence thou passed'st ne'er to annul,
For the cup of the Amorite then was full!

"The spirit of man awoke at thy nod,
The elements rose and owned their God:
The sun, and the moon, and the floods below,
And the stars in their courses fought thy foe;
The very heavens and earth seemed blent
In the lowering toiling firmament.
The clouds poured swiftly along the sky,
They thickened, they frowned, but they past not by!
The ravens called with boding sound,
The dogs of Moscow howled around;
And the shades of men and of maidens fair,
Were seen on the dull and cumbered air.
The storm descended, the tempest blew,
Thy vengeance poured on the ruthless crew.
O God! thy vengeance was never so due!

"I saw thy hand in the coil of the war;
I heard thy voice in the thunder afar,
When the Elbe waved slow with the blood of man,
And the Saale scarce gurgled as it ran.
O Father! forgive the insensate heart
That ascribes such wonders to human part.
'Twas thou madest the hearts of the nations combine:
Yes, thine is the work, and the glory be thine.

"But chiefly when he, the scourge of the earth,
Was proffered the friendship and hands of the north,
And thus, in that empire, the bane of the day,
His dynasty might have been 'stablished for aye:
What counsel of man could the proffer have scorned!
Nor reason, nor madness, could that have suborned.
But the hearts of men are thine own alone,
As the streams of water thou windest them on;
And save when thou parted'st Jordan's tide,
And the gates of the Red Sea opened'st wide,
Oh never so well since time hath been,
Was the governing arm of thy providence seen.

"But the injured still were unavenged,
And the men of crimes remained unchanged,
Till thou roused'st them again in triple wrath,
And brought them like beasts to the house of death.
With other kings and armies leagued,
They might have contended or intrigued,
But the judgment was passed which they could not shun;
Thou brought'st them here, and the work was done!
The victory is thine, we nothing abate,
But thou gavest it the good as well as the great:
And their names are registered with thee
Who have bled for the cause of liberty.

"This morn I bowed above my blade,
I bowed to thee, and for victory prayed;
I prayed that my countrymen might gain,
Though my heart's blood should steep the plain.
Thou hast heard my prayer, and answered me,
And with joy I yield my spirit to thee.

"And now, O God! the time is near
When I may no more address thine ear;
Few moments, and human scrutiny,
Tell me not what I then shall be:
An igneous lamp in the fields below;
A dye of heaven's aërial bow;
A stilly vapour on space reclined,
Or a breath of discoloured wandering wind:—
But oh, while I have speech to say
The thing that I would, I humbly pray

That I for a space may wander free,
To visit the scenes of my infancy:
The tiny green, where the schoolboys play;
The level pool, with its bridge so gray;
And oh, there's a cot by the lonely flood,
With its verdant steep, and its ancient wood,
Its willow ring, and its sounding stream,
So like the scene of a fairy dream;—
Oh might I there a while reside,
To rest with the lamb on the mountain's side,
Or stand by the heath-cock's ruby eye,
And wonder he cannot my form espy.

"And in that cot there is a dame,
I cannot, dare not say her name!
Oh, how I long to listen there,
To hear that loved one's evening prayer;
And in that cot a cradle moves,
Where sleeps the infant that she loves:
Oh I would like to hover by,
When none but she and that child are nigh,
When her arms stretch to the dear embrace,
And the baby smiles her in the face;
Or when she presses him to her heart,
To watch when the holy tear shall start,
And list no other ear to hear,
If she named a name she once held dear.

"O God, if such a thing might be
That a guardian spirit, empowered by thee,
Still round that dwelling linger must,
Oh may I beg the sacred trust?
I'll do, all evil to cause them shun,
More than a spirit before has done;
Against each danger I'll forecast,
And bring them to thyself at last.

"But wherever my future lot may be,
I have no dread of wrath from thee;
For I know thee merciful and good,
Beyond the fathom of flesh and blood:
And there is a bond 'twixt man and thee,
'Twas sealed and finished on the tree;
Of that, too mystic to unfold,
I will not, cannot quit my hold.
Accept me, Lord, that I may bless
Thy name in better world than this.

"I have but one remembrance left,
Before my tongue of speech is reft.
My widowed parent oh regard,
And all her love to me reward.
Fondly she nursed my tender years,
With buoyant hopes, and yearning fears;
She weened not, in these hours of bliss,
That she reared her child to an end like this.
To save her declining age from woe,
Her darling's fate may she never know;
But still look down the mountain burn
To see her wandering son return,
Her parting blessing to receive,
And lay her head in an honoured grave:
That hope may still support her heart,
Till we meet again no more to part."

———

The light of life blazed not again;
He could not say the word AMEN;
But he turned his eye, and spread his hand
To the star above his native land;
Serenely in that posture lay,
And breathed his generous soul away.

The Russian heaved a sigh profound,
And gazed insensate on the ground,
The burning tear struck from his eye,
And flung it on the breeze to dry.
The stoic Prussian, in his pride,
Unstaidly looked from side to side,
Then fixed on heaven a solemn scowl,
Impelled by his unfathomed soul,
That felt deep yearnings unconfest
For some eternal home of rest.
"What's this?" said he, "who can conceive?
I cannot fathom, nor believe
The substance of this Christian faith:
But 'tis a steadfast hold in death!
I never saw its hideous door
Entered with such a mien before!"

Onward they passed in moody plight,
Leaving the pale corse on the height,
And said before to British lords
This soldier's prayer and dying words,
Who well can vouch this tale is true
Of converse held on Waterloo.

We learned our comrade was no more,
And many an eye for him ran o'er,
In friendship's little circle kind,
For who not leaves some friends behind?
But yet his prayer was heard in part,
For no one had the cruel heart
His parent of his fate to tell;—
She died believing he was well.

Ofttimes I visit for his sake
The cottage by the lonely lake,
And I have heard its beauteous dame
With tears pronounce her lover's name:
And once I saw her comely child;
It bent its eyes on air and smiled,
Stretching its arms with fervent mien,
As if to reach to something seen.
I've seen the wild-fowl watch and quake,
And cower in terror 'mid the brake,
And the mild lamb with steady eye
Gazing intent, I knew not why;
Then chilling thoughts have on me pressed
Of an unbodied heavenly guest,
Sent there to roam the lonely wild,
To guard the mother and the child;
For to the death-bed prayer is given
Free passage to the throne of heaven!

Allan of Dale.

At the dawning of morn, on a sweet summer day,
Young Mary of Moy went out to pray,—
To pray, as her guileless heart befitted,
For the pardon of sins that were never committed;
A grateful homage to render Heaven
For all its gifts and favours given,—
For a heart that dreaded the paths of sin;
For a soul of life and light within;
And a form, withal, so passing fair
That the rays of love seem'd centring there.

Mary felt that her eye was beaming bright,
For her bosom glow'd with a pure delight:
As over the greenwood sward she bounded,
A halo of sweets her form surrounded;
For the breezes that kiss'd her cheek grew rare,
Her breathing perfumed the morning air;
And scarce did her foot, as she onward flew,
From the fringe of the daisy wring out the dew.

She went to her bower, by the water-side,
Which the woodbine and wild-rose canopied;
And she knelt beneath its fragrant bough,
And waved her locks back from her brow;
But just as she lifted her eye so meek,
A hand from behind her touch'd her cheek:
She turn'd her around, with a visage pale,
And there stood Allan of Borlan-dale!

ALLAN.

Sweet Mary of Moy, is it so with thee?
Have I caught thee on thy bended knee,
Beginning thy rath orisons here,
In the bower to the breathings of love so dear?
Oh tell me, Mary, what this can mean!
Hast thou such a great transgressor been?
Is the loveliest model of mortal kind
A thing of an erring, tainted mind,
That thus she must kneel and heave the sigh,
With the tear-drop dimming her azure eye?
To whom wert thou going thy vows to pay?
Or for what, or for whom, wert thou going to pray?

MARY.

I was going to pray in the name divine
Of Him that died for me and for mine;
I was going to pray for them and me,
And haply, Allan, for thine and thee;
And now I have answered as well as I may
Your questions thus put in so strange a way:
But I deem it behaviour most unmeet,
Thus to follow a maid to her lone retreat,
To hear her her heart of its sins unload,
And all the secrets 'twixt her and her God.
For shame! that my kindred should hear such a tale
Of the gallant young Allan of Borlan-dale!

ALLAN.

Sweet Mary of Moy, I must be plain:
I have told you once, and tell you again,
Though in love I am deeper than woman can be,
You must either part with your faith or me.

MARY.

What! part with my faith? You may as well demand,
That I should part with my own right hand!
Than part with that faith I would sooner incline
To part with my heart from its mortal shrine.

ALLAN.

Ah Mary! dear Mary! how can you thus frown,
And propose to part with what's not your own?
For that heart now is mine: and you must, my sweet dove,
Renounce that same faith on the altar of love.

Then Mary's sweet voice took its sharpest key,
And rose somewhat higher than maiden's should be;
But ere the vehement sentence was said,
A gentle hand on her lips was laid,
And a voice, to her that was ever dear,
Thus whisper'd softly in her ear:—

LADY OF MOY.

Hush, Mary! dear Mary! what madness is this?
These dreams of the morning, my darling, dismiss:
Awake from this torpor of slumber so deep;
You are raving and clamouring through your sleep:
Up, up, and array you in scarlet and blue:
For Allan of Dale is come here to woo.

MARY.

Tell Allan of Dale straight home to hie,
And court Helen Kay, or his darling of Skye:
This positive message deliver from me,
For I list not his heretic face to see.

LADY.

My Mary! dear Mary! what am I to deem?
Arouse you, my love; you are still in your dream:
Your lover's views of things divine
May differ in some degree from thine;
But I think he is one who will not pother
Betwixt the one faith and the other.

MARY.

That is worse and worse: for my lover must be
Attach'd to my faith as well as to me:
We must kneel at one beloved shrine,
And the mode of his worship must be mine.
For why should a wedded pair devout,
By different paths seek heaven out?
Or in that dwelling happy be,
Who of the road could never agree?
O mother! this day, without all fail,
I had given my hand to young Borlan-dale;
But I've had such a hint from the throne on high,
Or some good angel hovering nigh,
That tongue of mortal should never prevail
On me to be bride to this Allan of Dale,
Unless he sign over a bond, for me
In the path of religion his guide to be.

Young Allan to all his companions was known
As a sceptic of bold and most dissolute tone,
Who jeer'd at the cross, at the altar and priest,
And made our most holy communions his jest;
Yet Mary of this had of knowledge no gleam,
Till warned of her danger that morn in her dream.
He loved his Mary for lands and for gold,
For beauty of feature, and beauty of mould,
As well as a cold-hearted sceptic could love
Who held no belief in the blessings above;
And whene'er of his faith or his soul she spoke,
He answered her always with jeer and with joke.

The frowns of the maiden, and sighs of the lover,
With poutings and nay-says, were all gotten over;
And nothing remained but the schedule-deed gerent,
The bonds and the forms of the final agreement,—
A thing called a contract, that long-galling fetter!
Which parents love dearly, and lawyers love better.
In this was set down, at the maiden's indictment,
One part, to devotion a powerful incitement,
That her lover should forfeit, without diminution,
Her fortune redoubled, (a sore retribution!)
If ever his words or his actions should jostle
With the creed she revered of the holy apostle.
The terms were severe, but resource there was none;
So he sign'd, seal'd, and swore, and the bridal
went on.
Well was it for Mary, for scarce were got over
The honeymoon joys, ere her profligate lover
Began his old gibes, when in frolicsome mood,
At all that the Christian holds sacred and good:
But still, lest the terms might be proven in law,
The bond and the forfeiture kept him in awe;
Which caused him to ponder and often think of it—
This thing that he jeer'd at, and where lay the
profit?
Till at last, though by men it will scarce be believed,
A year had not pass'd, ere he daily perceived
The truths of the gospel rise bright and more bright,
Like the dawning of day o'er the darkness of night,
Or the sun of eternity rising to save
From the thraldom of death, and the gloom of the
grave.

Then Mary's fond heart was with gratitude moved
To her God, for the peace of the man that she loved;
And her mild face would glow with the radiance of
beauty,
As he urged her along on her Christian duty;
For of the two, his soul throughout
Grew the most sincere and the most devout.

Then their life passed on like an autumn day,
That rises with red protentous ray,
Threatening its pathway to deform
With the wasting flood and the rolling storm;
But long ere the arch of the day is won,
A halo of promise is round the sun,
And the settled sky, though all serene,
Is ray'd with the dark and the bright between;
With the ruddy glow and the streamer wan,
Like the evil and good in the life of man;
And, at last, when it sinks on the cradle of day,
More holy and mild is its sapphire ray.
Oh! why should blind mortals e'er turn into mirth
The strange intercourse betwixt heaven and earth;
Or deem that their Maker cannot impart,
By a thousand ways, to the human heart,
In shadows protentous of what is to be,
His warnings, His will, and His final decree!

This tale is a fact—I pledge for't in token,
The troth of a poet, which may not be broken;
And had it not been for this dream of the morn,
This vision of prayer, intrusion, and scorn,
Which Heaven at the last hour thus deign'd to
deliver,
The peace of the twain had been ruin'd for ever.

Jock Johnstone the Tinkler.

"Oh, came ye ower by the Yoke-burn Ford,
Or down the King's Road of the cleuch?
Or saw ye a Knight and a lady bright,
Wha hae gane the gate they baith shall rue?"

"I saw a knight and a lady bright,
Ride up the cleuch at the break of day;
The knight upon a coal-black steed,
And the dame on one of the silver gray.

"And the lady's palfrey flew the first,
With many a clang of silver bell:
Swift as the raven's morning flight,
The two went scouring ower the fell.

"By this time they are man and wife,
And standing in St. Mary's fane;
And the lady in the grass-green silk
A maid you will never see again."

"But I can tell thee, saucy wight—
And that the runaways shall prove—
Revenge to a Douglas is as sweet
As maiden charms or maiden's love."

"Since thou say'st that, my Lord Douglas,
Good faith some clinking there will be;
Beshrew my heart, but and my sword,
If I winna turn and ride with thee!"

They whipp'd out ower the shepherd cleuch,
And down the links o' the Corsecleuch burn;
And aye the Douglas swore by his sword
To win his love or ne'er return.

"First fight your rival, Lord Douglas,
And then brag after, if you may;
For the Earl of Ross is as brave a lord
As ever gave good weapon sway.

"But I for ae poor siller merk,
Or thirteen pennies an' a bawbee,
Will tak in hand to fight you baith,
Or beat the winner, whiche'er it be."

The Douglas turn'd him on his steed,
And I wat a loud laughter leuch he:—
"Of all the fools I have ever met,
Man, I hae never met ane like thee.

"Art thou akin to lord or knight,
Or courtly squire or warrior leal?"
"I am a tinkler," quo the wight,
"But I like crown-cracking unco weel."

When they came to St. Mary's kirk,
The chaplain shook for very fear;
And aye he kiss'd the cross, and said,
"What deevil has sent that Douglas here!

"He neither values book nor ban,
But curses all without demur:
And cares nae mair for a holy man,
Than I do for a worthless cur."

"Come here, thou bland and brittle priest,
And tell to me without delay,
Where you have hid the Lord of Ross,
And the lady that came at the break of day!"

"No knight or lady, good Lord Douglas,
Have I beheld since break of morn;
And I never saw the Lord of Ross,
Since the woeful day that I was born."

Lord Douglas turn'd him round about,
And look'd the tinkler in the face:
Where he beheld a lurking smile,
And a deevil of a dour grimace.

"How's this, how's this, thou tinkler loun!
Hast thou presumed to lie to me?"
"Faith that I have!" the tinkler said,
"And a right good turn I have done to thee:

"For the Lord of Ross, and thy own true love,
The beauteous Harriet of Thirlestane,
Rade west away, ere the break of day;
And you'll never see that dear maid again:

"So I thought it best to bring you here,
On a wrang scent, of my own accord;
For had you met the Johnstone clan,
They wad hae made mince-meat of a lord."

At this the Douglas was so wroth,
He wist not what to say or do;
But he strak the tinkler o'er the croun,
Till the blood came dreeping ower his brow.

"Beshrew thy heart," quo the tinkler lad,
"Thou bear'st thee most ungallantlye!
If these are the manners of a lord,
They are manners that winna gang down wi' me."

"Hold up thy hand," the Douglas cried,
"And keep thy distance, tinkler loun!"
"That will I not," the tinkler said,
"Though I and my mare should both go down!"

"I have armour on," cried the Lord Douglas,
"Cuirass and helm, as you may see."
"The deil may care!" quo the tinkler lad:
"I shall have a skelp at them and thee."

"You are not horsed," quo the Lord Douglas,
"And no remorse this weapon brooks."
"Mine's a right good yaud," quo the tinkler lad,
"And a great deal better nor she looks.

"So stand to thy weapons, thou haughty lord;
What I have taken I needs must give:
Thou shalt never strike a tinkler again,
For the langest day thou hast to live."

Then to it they fell, both sharp and snell,
Till the fire from both their weapons flew:
But the very first shock that they met with,
The Douglas his rashness 'gan to rue.

For though he had on a sark of mail,
And a cuirass on his breast wore he,
With a good steel bonnet on his head,
Yet the blood ran trinkling to his knee.

The Douglas sat upright and firm,
Aye as together their horses ran:
But the tinkler laid on like a very deil—
Siccan strokes were never laid on by man.

"Hold up thy hand, thou tinkler loun,"
Cried the poor priest, with whining din:
"If thou hurt the brave Lord James Douglas,
A curse be on thee and all thy kin!"

"I care no more for Lord James Douglas,
Than Lord James Douglas cares for me;
But I want to let his proud heart know,
That a tinkler's a man as well as he."

So they fought on, and they fought on,
Till good Lord Douglas' breath was gone;
And the tinkler bore him to the ground,
With rush, with rattle, and with groan.

"O hon! O hon!" cried the proud Douglas,
"That I this day should have lived to see!
For sure my honour I have lost,
And a leader again I can never be!

"But tell me of thy kith and kin,
And where was bred thy weapon hand?
For thou art the wale of tinkler louns
That ever was born in fair Scotland."

"My name's Jock Johnstone," quo the wight—
"I winna keep in my name frae thee;
And here, take thou thy sword again,
And better friends we two shall be."

But the Douglas swore a solemn oath,
That was a debt he could never owe;
He would rather die at the back of the dike,
Than owe his sword to a man so low.

"But if thou wilt ride under my banner,
And bear my livery and my name,
My right-hand warrior thou shalt be,
And I'll knight thee on the field of fame."

"Woe worth thy wit, good Lord Douglas,
To think I'd change my trade for thine;
Far better and wiser would you be,
To live as journeyman of mine,

"To mend a kettle or a casque,
Or clout a goodwife's yettlin pan—
Upon my life, good Lord Douglas,
You'd make a noble tinkler man!

"I would give you drammock twice a-day,
And sunkets on a Sunday morn;
And you should be a rare adept
In steel and copper, brass and horn.

"I'll fight you every day you rise,
Till you can act the hero's part;
Therefore, I pray you, think of this,
And lay it seriously to heart."

The Douglas writhed beneath the lash,
Answering with an inward curse—
Like salmon wriggling on a spear,
That makes his deadly wound the worse.

But up there came two squires renown'd;
In search of Lord Douglas they came;
And when they saw their master down,
Their spirits mounted in a flame.

And they flew upon the tinkler wight,
Like perfect tigers on their prey;
But the tinkler heaved his trusty sword,
And made him ready for the fray.

"Come one to one ye coward knaves—
Come hand to hand, and steed to steed,
I would that ye were better men,
For this is glorious work indeed!"

Before you could have counted twelve,
The tinkler's wondrous chivalrye
Had both the squires upon the sward,
And their horses galloping o'er the lea.

The tinkler tied them neck and heel,
And mony a biting jest gave he:
"O fie, for shame!" said the tinkler lad,
"Siccan fighters I did never see!"

He slit one of their bridal reins—
Oh what disgrace the conquer'd feels!
And he skelpit the squires with that good tawse,
Till the blood ran off at baith their heels.

The Douglas he was forced to laugh,
Till down his cheek the salt tears ran:
"I think the deevil be come here
In the likeness of a tinkler man!"

Then he is to Lord Douglas gone,
And he raised him kindly by the hand,
And he set him on his gallant steed,
And bore him away to Ilenderland:

"Be not cast down, my Lord Douglas,
Nor writhe beneath a broken bane,
For the leach's art will mend the part,
And your honour lost will spring again.

"'Tis true, Jock Johnstone is my name,
I'm a right good tinkler as you see;
For I can crack a casque betimes,
Or clout one, as my need may be.

"Jock Johnstone is my name, 'tis true—
But noble hearts are allied to me,
For I am the Lord of Annandale,
And a knight and earl as well as thee."

Then Douglas strain'd the hero's hand,
And took from it his sword again;
Since thou art the Lord of Annandale.
Thou hast eased my heart of meikle pain.

"I might have known thy noble form,
In that disguise thou'rt pleased to wear;
All Scotland knows thy matchless arm,
And England by experience dear.

"We have been foes as well as friends,
And jealous of each other's sway;
But little can I comprehend
Thy motive for these pranks to-day?"

"Sooth, my good lord, the truth to tell,
'Twas I that stole your love away,
And gave her to the Lord of Ross
An hour before the break of day:

"For the Lord of Ross is my brother,
By all the laws of chivalrye;
And I brought with me a thousand men
To guard him to my own countrye.

"But I thought meet to stay behind,
And try your lordship to waylay;
Resolved to breed some noble sport,
By leading you so far astray;

"Judging it better some lives to spare—
Which fancy takes me now and then—
And settle our quarrel hand to hand,
Than each with our ten thousand men.

"God send you soon, my Lord Douglas,
To Border foray sound and haill!
But never strike a tinkler again,
If he be a Johnstone of Annandale."

Ringan and May.

I heard a laverock singing with glee,
And oh but the bird sang cheerilye;
Then I askit at my true love Ringan,
If he kend what the bonny bird was singing!

Now, my love Ringan is blithe and young,
But he has a fair and flattering tongue;
And oh, I'm fear'd I like ower weel
His tales of love, though kind and leal!
So I said to him, in scornful ways,
"You ken nae word that wee burd says!"

Then my love he turn'd about to me,
And there was a smile in his pawky ee;
And he says, "My May, my dawtied dow,
I ken that strain far better nor you;
For that little fairy that lilts so loud,
And hangs on the fringe of the sunny cloud,
Is telling the tale, in chants and chimes,
I have told to thee a thousand times.
I will let thee hear how our strains accord,
And the laverock's sweet sang, word for word:

Interpretation of the Lark's Song.

"'Oh, my love is bonnie and mild to see,
As sweetly she sits on her dewy lea,
And turns up her cheek and clear gray eye,
To list what's saying within the sky!
For she thinks my morning hymn so sweet,
Wi' the streamers of heaven aneath my feet,
Where the proud goshawk could never won,
Between the gray cloud and the sun—
And she thinks her love a thing of the skies,
Sent down from the holy paradise,
To sing to the world, at morn and even,
The sweet love songs in the bowers of heaven.

"'Oh my love is bonnie, and young, and chaste,
As sweetly she sits in her mossy nest!
And she deems the birds on bush and tree,
As nothing but dust and droul to me.
Though the robin warble his waesome churl,
And the merle gar all the greenwood dirl,
And the storm-cock touts on his towering pine,
She trows their songs a mock to mine:
The linty's cheip a ditty tame,
And the shilfa's everlasting rhame;
The plover's whew a solo drear,
And the whilly-whaup's ane shame to hear:
And, whenever a lover comes in view,
She cowers beneath her screen of dew.

"'Oh, my love is bonnie! her virgin breast
Is sweeter to me nor the dawning east;
And well do I like at the gloaming still,
To dreep from the lift or the lowering hill,
And press her nest as white as milk,
And her breast as soft as the downy silk.'"

Now when my love Ringan had warbled away
To this base part of the laverock's lay,
My heart was like to burst in twain,
And the tears flow'd from mine eyne like rain;
At length he said, with a sigh full lang,
"What ails my love at the laverock's sang!"

Says I "He's ane base and wicked bird,
As ever rose from the dewy yird;
It's a shame to mount on his morning wing,
At the yetts of heaven sic sangs to sing:
And all to win with his amorous din,
A sweet little virgin bird to sin,
And wreck, with flattery and song combined,
His dear little maiden's peace of mind!
Oh, were I her, I would let him see,
His songs should all be lost on me!"

Then my love took me in his arms,
And 'gan to land my leifou charms;
But I would not so much as let him speak
Nor stroke my chin, nor kiss my cheek:
For I fear'd my heart was going wrang,
It was so moved at the laverock's sang.

Yet still I lay with an upcast e'e,
And still he was singing sae bonnilye,
That, though with my mind I had great strife,
I could not forbear it for my life,
But, as he hung on the heaven's brow,
I said, I ken not why, nor how,
"What's that little deevil saying now!"

Then my love Ringan, he was so glad,
He leugh till his folly pat me mad;
And he said, "My love, I will tell you true,
He seems to sing that strain to you;
For it says, 'I will range the yird and air
To feed my love with the finest fare:
And when she looks from her bed to me,
With the yearning love of a mother's e'e,
Oh, then I will come, and draw her nearer,
And watch her closer, and love her dearer,
And we never shall part till our dying day,
But love and love on for ever and aye!'"

Then my heart it bled with a thrilling pleasure
When it learn'd the laverock's closing measure,
And it rose, and rose, and would not rest,
And would hardly bide within my breast.
Then up I rose, and away I sprung,
And said to my love with scornful tongue,
That it was ane big and burning shame;
That he and the lark were both to blame;
For there were some lays so soft and bland
That breast of maiden could not stand;
And if he lay in the wood his lane,
Quhill I came back to list the strain
Of an amorous bird amang the broom,
Then he might lie quhill the day of doom!

But for all the sturt and strife I made;
For all I did, and all I said,

Alas! I fear it will be lang
Or I forget that wee burd's sang!
And langer still or I can flee
The lad that told that sang to me!

The Haunted Glen.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Lu, a Scottish prince, carried off by the Fairies, and afterwards chosen their king.	Philany,	Fairies.
Knight.	Dew,	
Spirit.	Snowflake,	
Lula, a princess living in concealment.	Foambell,	
	Rue,	
	Mothe,	
	Gossamer,	

Scene I.—*A dell, by moonlight, with a distant view behind.*

A fairy *enters, winding swiftly among the trees.* Voice *above.*

Voice. Fairy, fairy, whither away?

Fairy. Come down and see;
It fits not thee
To hide in the bud of the chestnut tree,
And scare with yelp and eldritch croon
The spirits that pass by the light of the moon.

Voice. I heard a sound come through the wood,
I feared it came from flesh and blood;
But I'll be with thee for evil or good.

Spirit *enters.*

Now, fairy, tell me whither away,
For I have much to thee to say,
And much to do ere the break of day.

Fairy. I know thee not—I cannot tell
Whether thou art from heaven or hell.
In Scottish glen, since the days of old,
I have watched the hamlet and the fold;
Long have I sojourned by mountain and dale;
I have sailed on the moonbeam, and rode on the gale
For a thousand years, and a thousand more,
But, spirit, I never saw thee before.

Spirit. Here am I sent a while to dwell;
Tell me thy nature, and mine I'll tell.

Fairy. This form was made when the rose first grew,
Of an odour dissolved in the falling dew,
When first from the heaven it 'gan to distil
Above the top of the highest hill:
And if I may judge, from the moment I came,
There's a germ of the rainbow in my frame;
For my being grew, I remember well,
When first the bow on the rose-bud fell;
And the very first scene that met my view,
Was its pale blossom, tinged anew
With stripes of the green, the red, and the blue.
But I am a spirit of joy and love,
For the breath that formed me was from above.

Spirit. Then, gladsome spirit, list to me,
For we may meet by tower and tree:
When first the fires of vengeance and wrath
Were kindled in a world beneath,
They from their boundaries burst on high,
And flashed into the middle sky;
From these a thin blue vapour came,
Something between a smoke and flame,
And it journeyed on through the firmament,
Till with a sun-beam it was blent:
Of that I was framed, and in my mood
There is something evil and something good.
But I have been busy since I came here;
There's a comely corse lies stretched near—
Within yon wood of alders grey
There was murder done at the close of day.
Oh, I ne'er saw so lovely a sight,
As a maiden's corse in the pale moonlight!

Fairy. Ah! spirit of stern and ill intent,
The land may rue that thou wast sent.

Spirit. 'Tis true, I love to seek and see
The evils of humanity,
And the woes and the plagues of the human lot!
But I cannot hurt where sin is not.
Come, trifling fay, I'll consort you,
The relics of mortal beauty to view;
The writhed limb you there may see,
And the stripes of blood upon the lea;
Half open is her still blue eye;
Her face is turned unto the sky;
The shadows sleep on her bosom bare,
And the dew-weft on her raven hair;
And never again shall spirit see
Such picture of sorrow and sanctity!

Fairy. Get thee away,
Thou elfin gray,
Thou art not fit with fairies to stay!
For me, I am sent by the still moonlight,
Each floweret's bosom to bedight.
For the fairies revel here o'er-night.
The time draws on when Lu of Kyle,
Who in Fairyland had sojourned a while,
Must be crowned, by a virgin's hand,
The king of the fairies of fair Scotland:
And fairies have ridden, and fairies have run,
From the evening set till the morning sun,
The first of mortal maidens to find,
Fairest of body, and purest of mind;
For she must be chaste as the snow-drop at noon,
Stately as cherubim, mild as the moon,
Sweet as the rose-bud, and fresh as the dew,
That sets the crown on the head of King Lu.

Spirit. If right I judge, you will only miss
Your aim in travelling far for this;

For in this glen there dwells a dame,
The fairest of human form and name;
But if I get sway of this woodland scene,
This matchless maid shall be, ere e'en,
What many a maiden before has been.

Fairy. Get thee away,
Thou elfin gray,
Thou art not fit with fairies to stay!
The fairies of Scotia are mild as the even,
Jocund and blithe as the laverock in heaven;
Tender to childhood, gentle to age,
Pesterous to priest, and freakish to sage:
But whatever they do, or wherever they go,
They grieve aye for human failings and woe.
Get thee away, over brake, over thorn;
Woo thy dead corse till the break of the morn,
For I hear the sound of the fairies' horn.

[*Spirit vanishes.*

SCENE *continues.*

Endless trains of Fairies, clothed in green, and riding on white steeds, are seen in the distance.

SONG *within.*

Sweet is the mountain breeze of night,
To fairy troopers blithely riding,
Over holt, and holm, and height,
Through the links of greenwood gliding.

CHORUS.

Ara Lu! Ora Lu!
Who shall man and fairy sever?
Ara Lu! Ora Lu!
They are knit, and knit for ever.

Lu is prince of Fairyland,
Vales of light and fairy fountains;
Lu shall wield the regal wand
Over Scotia's heathy mountains.

CHORUS.

Ara Lu! Ora Lu! &c.

Enter LU *and* FEMALE FAIRIES.

First Fairy. Our names, prince—our new names!

Lu. Come hither, beauteous trifle.
Thy name be hence Philany, and thy charge
The nestlings of the birds, that sing at eve
And ere the morning sun. And thou, pale blossom,
Thy name is Snowflake; and thy envied charge,
The walks and couch of virgin purity:
Oh guard that well! If e'er thou mark'st the eye
Beaming with more than earthly lustre, then
Thy sickening opiates use, to dim the ray
Too bright for man to look on. In the night,
By maiden's bosom watch; and if she dream,
Lay thy cold hand upon her youthful breast;
Hang on her waving locks by day, and watch
Her sweet and mellow breath; and as it heaves
And rocks thee to and fro, thou shalt discern
The slightest workings of the soul within;
The rest thy wisdom and thy care direct.

Kiss me, thou little sweet and humid thing,
Bright as the orient—thy name be Dew;
Thy care, the wild flowers of the hill and dale,
To pearl the rose and weave the heavenly bow.
And thou, her sister, guard the rivulets,
And silver pools, where little fishes dwell,
And sport them in the sun: thou hast a flock
Full wayward and exposed—so be thy care:
Thy name is Foambell, brook thou well the name.
And thine is Rue—thy charge, declining life.
And thou, that hast a pathos in thy looks
Bespeaking mould of tenderness and love,
Be guardian thou of playful infancy.
Watch o'er the imps; and when the comely boy
Nears to the precipice, where blossoms wave,
Or to the pool, where green inverted hills,
And trees, and shrubs betray—then flutter thou
Close by his foot like gilded butterfly,
To lure the rosy lubber from the snare
Of adders young, and from the slow-worm's den.
Thy name is Mothe; the joy of doing good
Be thy reward.

Thou downy dancing thing,
Fond as the nestling, playful as the fawn,
Thy dwelling be the mountain, and thy task
To guard the young deer and the leveret
And tender lamb—thy name is Gossamer.
Embrace me all, then bound you on your way,
To sport and revel till the dawn of day.

[*He embraces them all.*

Sweet gladsome beings! sweet you are, and kind.
And well I love you. But my mortal frame
Is not so subtilized and pure, but that
I feel in your communion something short
Of true felicity. In all your rounds,
And wanderings wild, search for the mortal maid
Of purity and beauty so refined
That spirits may consort with; and no stain
Of human love or longing intervene.

Dew. Prince, here I met with a spirit stern,
Who said that by this forest dern,
There dwells the fairest, loveliest dame,
That ever wore the human frame;
But wicked men and fiends below
Have both combined to work her woe.
Prince, watch this glen, and if you see
A knight of comely courtesy
Lead a fair maiden to the wood,
Of lady mien, and mournful mood;
Be sure that knight's intent is ill,
For the blood is on his corslet still!

Lu. Hie you away by valley and brae,
Attend to your tasks by night and by day,

And each take a thousand fays along,
To tend your behests for right or for wrong;
And here will I watch till the rising sun,
For fear more guilty deeds be done.

The Fairies dance slowly round him in a circle, and sing.

The baby's rest shall be sweet and sure,
The maiden's slumber blest and pure;
The gray-haired sire shall rejoice in mind,
And look before and not behind.
The flowers shall blow, and the rainbow beam,
The fishes sport in the sunny stream;
Young Love and Peace shall go hand in hand,
And Sin and Sorrow flee the land;
The lamb beside the fox shall stray,
The kid and fawn round the martin play,
And the child shall dance by the adder's den,
Since spirits pure are conjoined with men.

CHORUS.

Then hie away, fairies, hie away,
Light over flower and tender spray,
Light over moonbeam and midnight dew,
Our blithesome gambols to renew.

SCENE II.—*A wood.*

Enter LU.

Lu. Another day is past, and it has been
To me a day of such delight, and pain,
And new sensations mingled, as I never
Deemed consonant with being. I have seen
The peerless maid of this romantic glen;
Have watched her every motion, word, and look,
With lover, and alone. Such beauty, truth,
And purity of soul, I did not ween
This sinful world contained! I love her so,
That I would yield this incorporeal frame,
This state of mental energy, attained
By seven years' penance, and again assume
My former state of gross humanity,
Rather than lose that virgin's fellowship,
Her confidence, and love. I watched her steps,
Led by that treacherous, that decoying fiend,
That demon in the guise of man, and heard
His smooth deceitful tale. I took the form
Of redbreast, and I hopped upon the spray
Close to her cheek, and sung my plaintive note;
And she called me "sweet robin," and I saw
A kindness in her looks. "Sir knight," said she,
"List to that robin's note. Methinks he says,
'Beware, young simple Lula.'" "On my faith,"
The knight replied, "'tis very like these words!"
"I wish I were that robin's mate," said she,
"To fly away with him o'er many lands,
And live in innocence!" And then I sung
"Would that you were, sweet Lula." Her blue eyes
Turned doubtfully up to the sky, when this
She heard sung by a bird; her lovely face
Was stamped with sweet amazement and deep thought.

Then I became a coney, and I stole
From out the brake, and hitched around their seat,
Mouching the herbs, and raised up my long ears
As listening in dismay, and looked full wise,
Making my cloven lip and wiry beard
Move with grimace. Back to the thicket then
Amain I scudded, and as quick returned,
And cowered, and mouched the grass—she laughed at me,
And praised my antic tricks, but little weened
I was a fairy lover, and far less
A mortal prince rid of his mortal nature.
I must retire and take some other form,
For here my loved and beauteous Lula comes,
Led by the wretch that wooes her to her fate.

[*Exit.*

Enter LULA *and* KNIGHT.

Lula. Where do you lead me, knight? I may not go
Farther into the glen: have you not heard
How it is haunted?

Knight. Fear not, gentle Lula;
No spirit may do harm to innocence
And beauty such as thine. Come, let us stray
Deeper into this dell, and watch the rise
Of the full moon. See how her radiant verge
Streams through the broken cliffs of yon far hill,
Like fragments of a moon. The queen of heaven
Smiles from her lattice. Has it not a cast
Of sweet sublimity that scene, my Lula?

Lula. It has—oh, I could list and look for ever,
And muse upon these goings on of nature!

Knight. 'Tis a fit scene for love. Will you not hear
The man that loves you to distraction, breathe
The vows of constancy and endless love?

Lula. Nay, then I'm gone; I loathe the very name
Of love, and every baneful consequence
That follows in its train. Why talk to me
Of love, when Emma's lost? Emma, who loved you
With fondness never equalled! Tell me, knight,
Where think you Emma's gone?

Knight. How can I know?
Woe's me, poor Emma! She is fled, I fear,
With false deceiver, or some base-born hind—
Let us not think of her.

Lula. Yet you grow pale
At mention of her name—I honour you
For this. 'Tis true she loved you! What is here?
There's blood upon your basnet, knight! Your hilt
And arm are stained with it. What blood is this?

Knight. It is the blood of my white steed, which I
Slew in a rage, that now I sore repent.

Lula. Your steed is whole and standing in his stall;
I saw him; ask your groom.

Knight. It was my hound,
My milk-white hound—Woe's me that she is slain!

Lula. Your hound is well, and hunting through the wood.

Knight. It was a deer that held the hound at bay,
'Twas that I meant.

Lula. You have not slain a deer
For months and days, nor is it hunting time:
You rave, or do not think of what you say.
But here's our gentle robin come again,
To cheer us with his homely note. O knight,
Let us return. Hear what the robin sings!

Knight. Come let us dive into the dell, my Lula,
And see the moon lie bathing in the stream,
Deep in the centre of the wood; it is
A scene will charm you. Let us go, my love.

Lula. I never farther leave my home at eve;
That glen is dangerous, for spirits there
Hold nightly rendezvous. Poor Emma loved
Thoughtful to stray in it—now, where, alas!
Is simple Emma? Knight, though I nought fear,
Strange fancies crowd on me. Ah, might it be
As I now deem! Do guardian spirits ever
Take form of beast or bird?

Knight. So sages say;
But wherefore ask? Come, let us go, my love,
Down that sweet winding glen. You cannot fear
To walk that space with me? I know the scene
Hath that in't will delight you. You shall see
The moonbeam streaming o'er the shadowy hill,
To kiss the winding wave, and deck the trees
In golden foliage. You shall see the shades
Of hills, and trees, and rocks, lie stretched afar,
Bathing in liquid crystal, till you lose
Sense which is the true world, the stars and moon,
And which the elemental imagery.
Oh! I beseech you let us go, sweet Lula.

Lula. Well, I will go, for when I hear you talk
Of nature, I am charmed—'tis so unlike
The converse of these simple cottagers;
But talk of that alone, and not of love,
Else I'll not list, nor answer deign to you.
Why am I plagued with language which I loathe?
[*Going, stops short.*
Protect my senses, Heaven! Can it be!
Look at that bird, sir knight—is it not changed
In form and hue since last we looked at it?

Knight. What is it?

Lula. See! it grows and changes still:
Waylays and threatens us—I will not go
Farther upon that path for will of man.

Knight. Then my resolve is fixed—Dame, you *shall* go,
Return home as you may.

Lula. What do you mean!

Knight. Only that you shall go into that glen,
Far as I list to lead you: if you prove
As coy when you return, my well-earned skill
In woman I give up. Nay, struggle not.
Nor pule, nor cry, for neither shall avail!

LU *enters, and by a wave of his hand lays the* KNIGHT *flat on his back.*

Lula. O comely stranger, spare my helpless youth!
Protect and guard me! here I throw myself
Into your arms.

Lu. And from all brutal force
And insult shall these arms protect thee, maid.

Lula. Yes, I can trust you, there is in your look
And your embrace, that chastened dignity,
That calm pure sympathy, which I have longed
And pined so much to look on. Whence are you?
From what blest land or kingdom came you thus
To my deliverance?

Lu. These lands were mine,
Far as the soaring eagle's eye can reach;
But I resigned them for a dynasty
Wild and ethereal. Could you love me, Lula?

Lula. I know not: If your touch and looks were aye
As pure as they are now—methinks I could.

Lu. Then I'll be aught for thee—I'll be again
The thing I was, that I may be caressed
And loved by you; though pain, and woe, and death,
And spirits' vengeance, on the issue wait.
Come with me, gentle maid; and while I lead you
Home to your cot, I will a tale unfold
Shall make your ears to tingle, and your thoughts
Wander into delirious mystery.
[*Exeunt* LU *and* LULA. *The* KNIGHT *rises.*

Knight. What can this mean? How was I struck to earth,
And chained as by some spell? Curse on the stripling!
Who can he be, or whither did he come,
To brave me in this guise? 'Tis like a dream;
And yet I saw them go, arm linked in arm,
While I not moved a finger or a limb.

Might I believe that I some thing have seen
Not of this world, that with one wave of 's hand,
Could strike me motionless, then do I strive
In vain for the possession of the maid.
But here I swear above this craven sword,
That for the first time slept within its sheath
Beneath the eye of insult, not to brook
Life without Lula. Never shall I see
Another filch that precious morsel, placed

Thus in my reach! Arm, thou wast never wont
To lie in dull and nerveless apathy
When will called "Strike;" ah! couldst thou do it now
When the most delicate and luscious cup
That ever mocked Desire's pale parching lip
Was rudely dashed away? Blood and revenge
Be hence thy meed, or scornful Lula mine!

SCENE III.—*The glen.—Twilight.*

LU *and* FAIRY *meeting.*

Lu. Welcome my little Foambell, here:
How fare thy flocks by frith and meer,
By river, pool, and streamlet clear?

Foam. O prince, my charge I yield again!
My little breast is rent with pain!
No happy thing on earth may be,
While ruthless man holds sovereignty.
I chose the sweetest stream that fell
From mountain glen, and moorland well,
Where happy, gay, and innocent,
My finny tribes were in thousands blent;
And I rejoiced and smiled to see
Each awkward beck and courtesy;
How downward turned each full set eye,
As I, their queen, went sailing by.

One day, I spied upon the strand,
A carl that waved a sounding wand
Of marvellous length, whom I did deem
Some earthly guardian of the stream;
But coming nigh I wept full sore
To see my people dragged ashore,
One after one, and two by two,
And welcomed forth with murderous blow:
While their dying throes rejoiced his sight,
For his ugly face had the grin of delight.

This scene my feelings could not bear;
I tried to wile them from the snare;
The form of a fisherman I took,
And I angled before him in the brook;
But they wearied of my phantom fly,
And the carl he thrashed and waded nigh;
I could not scare them from his hook,
For I cast no shadow on the brook;
Though boardly my frame, as man's might be,
"The sun shone through my thin bodye."
I wist not what to do or say,
For still the carl he plashed away;
And his rod, that stretched o'er half the flood,
It sounded through the air so loud,
That it made me start and pant for breath,
For I knew the sough was the sound of death.
No minute passed but one or more
Was dragged forth struggling to the shore;
I saw them flutter in wild affright,
And shiver and gasp in piteous plight;
Their silvery sides, that in the flood
Shone bright and pure, were striped with blood;
Yet no remorse did the carl feel,
But thrust them in his wicker creel.

Then I bethought me of a plan,
Of turning pike instead of man;
And aye where his hook the angler threw
I chased away my harmless crew:
Oh! how astonished were the throng
When I came gaping them among!
Away they fled to ward the scathe,
Fast I pursued with threat of death.
Most gleesome sport I had the while,
But wondered at the carl's wile,
For o'er the ripple he swam his fly,
So sleek and so provokingly,
That scarcely could I myself restrain
From springing at that bait amain;
For, though by sage it be denied,
Nature and form are still allied.

Amazement marked the fisher's look,
Another fish he could not hook;
He changed his tackle, he changed his fly,
And blamed the colour of the sky;
But, baulked for once, he went away.
Cursing the fish and hateful day.

Full six times twelve away he bore,
I saw him count them on the shore;
All reft of life withouten law,
To gorge a miscreant's ravenous maw.
Then sooth, while man has sway below,
My watery charge I must forego.

Lu. But here comes slender Gossamer,
Like shred of silver through the air.—
What news, thou gentle, pitying child,
From mountain, glen, and pathless wild?

Gos. Ah, woeful news! my heart's in pain!
All would be joy in my domain,
The kid and lamb would sport in peace,
The young deer dwell in happiness;
But man—remorseless, ravenous man,
Kills and devours; and stay who can!
The life-blood and the trembling limb
Of parting life are joy to him:
That rank devourer hence restrain,
Or take from me my charge again.

Lu. Woe's me, that those we so much love,
Such troublers should of nature prove:
But here comes one whose placid face
Speaks better things of the human race.
Welcome, sweet Snowflake, back to me;
How thrives sweet virgin purity?

Snow. Ah, Prince, decline the woeful theme!
Give it not thought—give it not name!
Else first restrain or quench the blood
Of man, the defacer of all good!
The maiden is pure without a stain,
And pure in mind would aye remain;

But man—I sicken at the thought
Of all the shame that he hath wrought;
There is no art—there is no wile
That may the maiden heart beguile,
And cloud for aye the joyous smile,
Which this destroyer scorns to prove—
This recreant in the paths of love.
Thousands to shame and ruin driven,
Debased on earth—debarred from heaven—
Of human forms and souls divine,
Yearly at Love's unholy shrine,
On bloated altar doomed to lie,
Unblest to weep, unwept to die.

Without regret, or wish t' atone,
He boasts his feats and urges on;
And when no other schemes remain
To give the virtuous bosom pain,
To beauty's walks he wends his way,
With shameless stare in open day,
To check the step, abash the eye,
And tint the cheek of modesty.
O prince! my charge I must disclaim,
While man's rude nature is the same.

And more; a baleful imp, I fear,
Is lately come to sojourn here;
A stranger spirit, bent on ill,
Whom I have watch'd o'er vale and hill:
His purposes we must gainsay,
Else shame may be ere break of day.
Yon cot I marked him prying round,
But scared him thence; and there I found
The loveliest maid of mortal race,
In dangerous and in helpless case.
A clown had crept her door within,
And left it open to the gin;
A dark knight stood her casement nigh,
With burning cheek, and greedy eye,
While the unweeting, simple maid,
Kneeled on the floor and inly prayed.
Her light locks o'er her shoulders swung,
Her night-robe round her waist was flung;
Her eyes were raised—her breast of snow
Heaved with devotion's grateful glow.
The speaking lip, the brow erect,
The movement on the polished neck,
The blooming cheek, the fervent mien,
Were all so comely, so serene,
The breeze of earth did ne'er embrace
Such pure angelic loveliness.

The peasant's rugged form I took,
And braved the blood-hound's surly look;
At me he flew with horrid bay:
I fled, provoked, and led the way
Straight to the base and wicked clown—
The ban-dog seized and pulled him down;
Aloud he cried, and fought for life,
And rough and bloody was the strife.

Then in the maiden's form so light,
Forthwith I glided by the knight,
Who followed fast, and begged and prayed,
But still I flew along the glade;—
Just when his arms were stretched to press
My waist with hellish eagerness,
A quagmire deep I led him in,
And left him struggling to the chin.

Thus far full deftly have I sped,
Protecting maidhood's guiltless bed;
But ah, if man, the lord below,
Continue still as he is now,
Alas! my prince, my toils will prove
Light balance in the scales of love.

But who would strive?—Last night I spied
The loveliest flower on Leven side
In her bed-chamber laid to rest,
A sweet babe cradled on her breast.
Such fondness melted in her eye—
Affection's holiest purity,
When with her breast the elfin played,
His round cheek to that bosom laid,
That I was moved, and weened if bliss
Be found in life's imperfectness,
If pure affection's from above,—
If "Love is Heaven, and Heaven is Love,"
All love, all fondness is outdone
By mother's o'er her only son:
That glow is bright, its workings kind,
Calm, chastened, ardent, yet refined.
Then let me roam, as heretofore,
And think of guarding maids no more.

Song by Lu.

Never, gentle spirits, never
Yield your cares of human kind!
Can you leave the lonely river,
From the moonlight valley sever,
All your guardian love resigned?
Thrown aside and scorned the giver?
Never, gentle spirits, never!

Chorus of Fairies.

Never till the dawn of day,
Dawn of truth that shine shall ever.
Will we quit our polar way;
Over greenwood, glen, and brae,
Over tree,
Over lea,
Over fell and forest free,
Over rock, and over river,
Over cairn and cloud to quiver:
Never, gentle spirits, never!
Never!—Never!

Scene IV.—*A deep dell.*

Knight *sitting disconsolate.*

Knight. Sure there's some power unseen, unmeet for man
To cope with, watches o'er that witching thing.

First by a stripling I was stunned, and laid
Flat without motion; next to slough decoyed,
Bayed by a madman—by a blood-hound torn.
If I escape infection from the fangs
Of that outrageous monster, I shall never
Strive for possession of that maiden more,
Though my heart burn within me.

SPIRIT *enters, and speaks and sings aside.*

Spirit. Then my sport will all be done:
Knight, before the rising sun,
Wet and weary, racked with pain,
You shall seek that maid again.

Sings.

My love's blithe as the bird on the tree;
My love's bonnie, as bonnie can be;
Though she loves another far better than me,
Yet the dream wears kind in the morning.

Then I will steal to my love's bed-side,
And I will kiss my bonnie, bonnie bride:
And I'll whisper a vow, whatever betide,
To my little flower in the morning.

Her breath is as sweet as the fragrant shower
Of dew that is blown from the rowan-tree flower;
Oh, ne'er were the sweets of roseate bower,
Like my love's cheeks in the morning!

Her eye is the blue-bell of the spring,
Her hair is the fleece of the raven's wing;
To her bonnie breast oh how I'll cling,
While sleeping so sound in the morning!

Enter LU *and* FAIRIES.

Lu. Fairies, the night wears on apace:
There's a paleness spread on the heaven's face,
A silvery haze so mild to see,
As lambent and as pure as we.
Soon will we mount with blithesome sway
Through these bright paths on our spiral way,
On the locks of the morning star to swing,
Or the veil of the sky for dew to wring;
To gallop the blue so lightsome and boon,
Or braid the fair tresses of beauty so bright,
That wanton and wave at the horns of the moon,
They are half of them ether, and half of them light.
But ere we depart from the morning ray,
To follow the moonlight west away,
O spirits, advise what shall be done,
This loveliest flower beneath the sun,
From shame, from sin, and from sorrow to win.

Dew. Bear her away,
'Twixt the night and the day;
We spirits have might
When we work for the right,
And each of us as much can bear
Of aught corporeal through the air,
As the swallow can carry on wing opprest,
Or the merle upbear to her downy nest.
Then bear her away
'Twixt the night and the day,
For she is too pure in the world to stay.

Lu. That may not be—by right divine,
In holy church and at holy shrine,
She has been washed with prayer and vow,
And named by a name to which we bow:
Or she must change with free good-will,
Or be as she is for good or for ill.
Should I her gain, say, shall she be
The Queen of the Fairies, and queen to me?

Dew. Treason and pain!
Speak not again;
Trial and penance must long remain!
Bonnie Philany, Snowflake, and Foam,
Rainbow, Rainbow, blink and go home!

Phil. (*Aside*). Regard not, prince, that freakish thing,
From jealousy her ravings spring;
One we must have, whatever befall;
To-morrow is our great festival,
And nought but mortal virgin's hand
Must crown thee King of Fairyland;
And then thy fate is fixed for ever,
From us and ours no more to sever.

Lu. Would that the time were not so soon!
It is not yet the wane of the moon.

Phil. Prince, I have a word to say to thee—
Your troubled mind and eye I see;
But if you dare to harbour a thought
Of yielding a crown so dearly bought,
With all the joys of the moonlight dell,
And the fervent beings that love you so well,
For the sake of a flower that will soon decay,
A piece of fair well-moulded clay,
We'll pick these bright eyes from your head,
And there we'll fix two eyes of lead;
We'll pull the heart from thy breast-bone,
And there we'll lodge a heart of stone:
So take thou care, lest some espy
The thoughts that in thy bosom lie.

Lu. Sweet friendly fay, 'tis all too true;
Nor thought nor wish I'll hide from you:
Either that maiden here I must have,
Or return to the world, to death, and the grave.
Oh, haste thee, Snowflake, haste and glide
To yon little cot by the greenwood side,
And watch yon maid till the break of day,
For I hear the watch-dog's angry bay:
Watch by her pillow, and look to her bed,
For I fear that beauty is hard bested.

Then hie you away, fairies, hie you away!
Lean to the breeze, and ride in array
Over the land and the sea so fleet;
Over the rain, and the hail, and the sleet;
Keep aye the sun far under your feet,

The morning behind and the stars by your side,
The moonbeam your path, and her crescent your guide;
For oh, her mild and humid flame
Suits best with the fairy's airy frame!
And meet we again to-morrow at even,
When the first star peeps through the veil of heaven;
And here such a palace of light shall be
As the world ne'er saw and never will see:
For there shall be lamps and glories in store,
And a thousand stars and a thousand more;
And there shall the ruby and onyx be seen,
The amethyst blue, and the emerald green,
With millions of gems of varied flame,
That have no likeness and have no name.
And our columns shall reach to the middle sky,
And the throne shall stand as the pine tree high;
Soft music shall flow of the spheres above,
The songs of gladness and songs of love;
And our feast shall begin with glory and glee—
But little we know what the end shall be!

Song.

Oh weel befa' the guileless heart
In cottage, bught, or pen!
And weel befa' the bonnie May
That wons in yonder glen;
Wha loes the good and true sae weel—
Wha's aye sae kind and aye sae leal,
And pure as blooming asphodel
Amang sae mony men;
Oh weel befa' the bonnie thing
That wons in yonder glen.

There's beauty in the violet's vest,
There's hinny in the haw,
There's dew within the rose's breast,
The sweetest o' them a'.
The sun may rise and set again,
And lace wi' burning gowd the main,
The rainbow bend attour the plain
Sae lovely to the ken;
But there's naething like my bonnie thing
That wons in yonder glen.

'Tis sweet to hear the music float
Alang the gloaming lea;
'Tis sweet to hear the blackbird's note
Come pealing frae the tree;
To see the lambkin's lightsome race;
The speckled kid in wanton chase;
The young deer cower in lonely place
Deep in his flowery den;
But what is like the bonnie face
That smiles in yonder glen!

* * * * *

The First Sermon.

Once, on a lovely day—it was in spring—
I went to hear a splendid young divine
Preach his first sermon. I had known the youth
In a society of far renown,
But liked him not, he held his head so high;
And ever and anon would sneer, and pooh!
And cast his head all to one side, as if
In perfect agony of low contempt
At everything he heard, however just.
Men like not this, and poets least of all.

Besides, there are some outward marks of men
One scarcely can approve. His hair was red,
Almost as red as German sealing-wax:
And then so curled—What illustrious curls!
'Twas like a tower of strength. Oh, what a head
For Combe or Dr. Spurzheim to dissect,
After 'twas polled! His shoulders rather narrow,
And pointed like two pins. And then there was
A primming round the mouth, of odious cast,
Bespeaking the proud vacancy within.

Well, to the Old Greyfriars' Church I went,
And many more with me. The place was crowded.
In came the beadle—then our hero follow'd
With gown blown like a mainsail, flowing on
To right and left alternate; the sleek beaver,
Down by his thigh keeping responsive time.
Oh, such a sight of graceful dignity
Never astounded heart of youthful dame!
But I bethought me, what a messenger
From the world's pattern of humility!

The psalm was read with beauteous energy,
And sung. Then pour'd the prayer from such a face
Of simpering seriousness—it was a quiz—
A mockery of all things deem'd divine.
Some men such faces may have seen among
The Methodists and Quakers—but I never.
The eyes were closely shut—one cheek turn'd up;
The mouth quite long and narrow like a seam,
Holding no fit proportion with the mouths
Which mankind gape with. Then the high curl'd hair
With quiver and with shake, announced supreme
The heart's sincere devotion: unto whom?
Ask not—it is unfair! Suppose to Heaven,
To the fair maids around the gallery,
Or to the gorgeous idol, Self-conceit.
Glad was my heart at last to hear the word,
That often long'd-for and desired word,
Which men yearn for as for the dinner-bell,
And now was beauteously pronounced, AY-MAIN!

Now for the sermon. O ye ruling Powers
Of poesy sublime, give me to sing
The splendours of that sermon! The bold *hem;*
The look sublime that beam'd with confidence;
The three wipes with the cambric handkerchief;
The strut—the bob—and the impressive thump
Upon the holy Book! No notes were there,
No, not a scrap—All was intuitive,
Pouring like water from a sacred fountain,
With current unexhausted. Now the lips

Protruded, and the eyebrows lower'd amain,
Like Kean's in dark Othello. The red hair
Shook like the wither'd juniper in wind.
'Twas grand—o'erpowering!—Such an exhibition
No pen of poet can delineate.

But now, Sir Bard, the sermon? Let us hear
Somewhat of this same grand and promised sermon—
Aha, there comes the rub! 'Twas made of *scraps*,
Sketches from *Nature*, from old Johnson some,
And some from Joseph Addison—John Logan—
Blair—William Shakspeare—Young's Night
Thoughts—The Grave—
Gillespie on the Seasons—Even the plain
Bold energy of Andrew Thomson here
Was press'd into the jumble. Plan or system
In it was not—no gleam of mind or aim—
A thing of shreds and patches—yet the blare
Went on for fifteen minutes, haply more.
The *hems!* and *haws!* began to come more close;
Three at a time. The cambrie handkerchief
Came greatly in request. The burly head
Gave over tossing. The fine cheek grew red—
Then pale—then blue—then to a heavy crimson.
The beauteous dames around the galleries
Began to look dismay'd; their rosy lips
Wide open'd; and their bosoms heaving so,
You might have ween'd a rolling sea within.
The gruff sagacious elders peered up,
With one eye shut right knowingly, as if
The light oppress'd it—but their features
Show'd restlessness and deep dissatisfaction.

The preacher set him down—open'd the Bible,
Gave half a dozen *hems;* arose again,
Then half a dozen more—It would not do!
In every line his countenance bespoke
The loss of recollection; all within
Became a blank—a chaos of confusion,
Producing nought but agony of soul.
His long lip quiver'd, and his shaking hand
Of the trim beaver scarcely could make seizure,
When, stooping, floundering, plaiting at the knees,
He—made his exit. But how I admired
The Scottish audience! There was neither laugh
Nor titter; but a soften'd sorrow
Portray'd in every face. As for myself,
I laugh'd till I was sick; went home to dinner,
Drank the poor preacher's health, and laugh'd again.

But otherwise it fared with him; for he
Went home to his own native kingdom—Fife,
Pass'd to his father's stable—seized a pair
Of strong plough-bridle reins, and hang'd himself.

And I have oft bethought me it were best,
Since that outrageous scene, for young beginners
To have a sermon, either of their own
Or other man's. If printed, or if written,
It makes small difference—but have it there
At a snug opening of the blessed book
Which any time will open there at will,
And save your credit. While the consciousness
That there it is, will nerve your better part,
And bear you through the ordeal with acclaim.

The Mermaid.

"Oh where won ye, my bonnie lass,
Wi' look sae wild an' cheery?
There's something in that witching face
That I lo'e wonder dearly."

"I live where the hare-bell never grew,
Where the streamlet never ran,
Where the winds o' heaven never blew;
Now find me gin you can."

"'Tis but your wild an' wily way,
The gloaming maks you eirie,
For ye are the lass o' the Braken-Brae,
An' nae lad maun come near ye:

"But I am sick, an' very sick
Wi' a passion strange an' new,
For ae kiss o' thy rosy cheek
An' lips o' the coral hue."

"O laith, laith wad a wanderer be
To do your youth sic wrang;
Were you to reave a kiss from me
Your life would not be lang.

"Go, hie you from this lonely brake,
Nor dare your walk renew;
For I'm the Maid of the Mountain Lake,
An' I come wi' the falling dew."

"Be you the Maid of the Crystal Wave,
Or she of the Braken-Brae,
One tender kiss I mean to have;
You shall not say me nay.

"For beauty's like the daisy's vest
That shrinks from the early dew,
But soon it opes its bonnie breast,
An' sae may it fare wi' you."

"Kiss but this hand, I humbly sue,
Even there I'll rue the stain;
Or the breath of man will dim its hue,
It will ne'er be pure again.

"For passion's like the burning beal
Upon the mountain's brow,
That wastes itself to ashes pale;
An' sae will it fare wi' you."

"O mother, mother, make my bed,
An' make it soft and easy;
An' with the cold dew bathe my head,
For pains of anguish seize me:

"Or stretch me in the chill blue lake,
To quench this bosom's burning;
An' lay me by yon lonely brake,
For hope there's none returning.

A tenderer mother, a nobler wife,
Ne'er waged, 'gainst earth and its sorrows, strife:
I never can bid a form arise
With purer heart than hers to the skies."

The Carle was moved with holy fear,
That lovely seraph's sweet song to hear;
He turn'd away and he cover'd his head,
For over him fell a visible dread,
While she gave her form to the breeze away
That came from the vales of immortal day;
And sung her hymns far over the same,
And heavenly Hope was the Seraph's name:
The guide to a land of rest and bliss,
To a sinless world—how unlike this!

To earth's blest pilgrim, old and gray,
The gate dissolved like a cloud away;
And the grim old Carle he veil'd his face,
As she pass'd him by with a holy pace;
With a touch of his hand and a whisper mild.
He soothed her heart as one stills a child.
The song of faith she faintly sung,
And God's dread name was last on her tongue.

Now from the pall, bright and sublime,
That hangs o'er the uttermost skirts of time,
Came righteous souls, and shapes more bright,
Clothed in glory and walking in light;
Majestic beings of earthly frame,
And of heavenly radiance, over the same:
To welcome the pilgrim of this gross clime,
They had come from Eternity back to time—
And they sung, while they wafted her on the road,
"Come, righteous creature, and dwell with God!"

The Frazers in the Correi.

"Where has your daddy gone, my little May?
Where has our lady been a' the lang day?
Saw you the red-coats rank on the ha' green?
Or heard you the horn on the mountain yestreen?"
"Auld carle graybeard, ye speer na at me,
Gae speer at the maiden that sits by the sea;
The red-coats were here, and it wasna for good,
For the raven's grown hoarse wi' the waughtin' o' blood.
"Oh listen, auld carle, how roopit his note!
The blood o' the Frazers too hot for his throat;
I trow the black traitors of Sassenach breed,
They prey on the living and he on the dead.
When I was a baby, we call'd him in joke,
The harper of Errick, the priest of the rock;
But now he's our mountain companion no more,
The slave of the Saxon, the quaffer of gore."

"Sweet little maiden, why talk you of death?
The raven's our friend, and he's croaking in wrath;
He will not pick eye from a bonneted head,
Nor mar the loved form by the tartans that's clad.
But point me the cliff where the Frazer abides,
Where Foyers, Culduthel, and Gorthaleg hides;
There's danger at hand, I must speak with them soon,
And seek them alone by the light of the moon."

"Auld carle graybeard, a friend you should be,
For the truth's on your lip and the tear in your e'e:
Then seek in yon correi, that sounds from the brae,
An' sings to the rock when the breeze is away.
I sought them last night with the haunch of the deer,
And deep in their cave they were hiding in fear:
There, at the last crow of the brown heather-cock,
They pray'd for their prince, kneel'd, and slept on the rock.

"Oh, tell me, auld carle, what will be the fate
Of those who are killing the gallant and great;
Who force our brave chiefs to the correi to go,
And hunt their own prince like the deer or the roe?
I know it, auld carle, as sure as yon sun
Shines over our heads, that the deeds they have done
To those who are braver and better than they,
There's one in this world or the next will repay."

The Lady's Dream.

Let April waft her breeze of life,
And sprinkle far her fostering dew,
And o'er the meadow's velvet breast
Her simple gems renew.
Yes, though she breathe her sweets for you
All o'er the lawn and verdant vale,
In sympathy, oh! stay with me,
And list my piteous tale!

I wist not when the dawning broke,
Nor when the sun rose bright and high;
What time I slept, nor when I woke,
I knew not—no not I.
I dreamed I sat on my love's knee,
I leaned my head upon his breast,
And yet I wept—I knew not why;
But oh, my heart was ill at rest!

I felt his arms around me prest:
His vows of love were breathed in vain:
For still my heart with sorrow heaved—
'Twas like to break in twain:
The tears fell from my eyes like rain;
He did not chide but went away;
A glance of anger in his eye
Gleamed like the meteor's ray.

I could not hold nor bid him stay,
Such were the throes my bosom wrung;
I tried to follow, but my limbs
Were powerless as my tongue.
I sought him through the busy throng,
I sought him through the weary waste,
Through caves of death and dens of woe
Deep moaning to the blast.

But when I rose, or how I past
That dreary day, is all a dream;
His form alone my fancy sought,
My feelings still the same:
'Tis said I often called his name;
But when they named my bridal day,
I wistful looked, and raving seemed—
My thoughts went all astray.

No more the bird sings from the spray,
Or summer fans her flowers for me;
The sunbeams all unheeded play,
And breezes from the sea.
Like passing hum of meadow bee,
Who winds his little aerial horn;
The fairy rainbow's ample bend,
Or dew-web of the morn;

So fled my bliss! So quick were shorn
The garlands from my maiden brow!
Sweet ladies, list a lady's tale
All lone and hopeless now!
The evening came with noise and show;
Mine eye sought for the bridegroom still—
His head is on the dripping pew,
His heart is cold and chill!

A corse lies in the cold church-aisle,
All dripping wet with ocean brine,
Whose gentle form is all unknown—
Ladies, that youth was mine!
That youth was gentle, fair, and kind;
My heart, my troth, I yielded free;
But, ah! his own hand reft his life—
His soul from heaven and me.

His bridal bed the drumly sea;
His revel-room the cheerless tomb;
The red worm sleeps coiled on the breast
My heart chose for its home.
No sun shall ever cheer the gloom
That broods around his hopeless urn;
No ray of grace avert his doom,
Nor point his soul's return.

Then can ye wonder why I mourn,
And shun the day-light's piercing eye;
Or why this pallid maiden cheek
Is never, never dry?
The vernal flowers of every dye
The mollient breezes will renew;
But mine for evermore shall lie
Unmoved by winds or dew.

And when yon sky's ethereal blue
Shall vanish like its slightest dye—
When all this green and solid globe
One mouldering heap shall lie;
Then where shall I my love descry?
Where hope his face to see again?
Oh! can ye wonder I should weep,
Ye ladies of the plain?

Yet, oh! let pity's gentle sigh
Spontaneous from your bosoms steal;
The dew of beauty's beaming eye
A maiden's bleeding heart may heal.

Up an' rin awa', Geordie.

It is a pity that we cannot father this on the ideal "Dwomony" altogether. However, it is not just so bad, when considered that it is an answer to a Whig song of 1746, beginning, "Up an' rin awa', Charlie," &c.

Up an' rin awa', Geordie,
Up an' rin awa', Geordie,
For feint a stand in Cumberland
Your troops can mak ava, Geordie.
Your bauld militia are in qualms,
In ague fits an' a', Geordie;
And auntie Wade, wi' pick an' spade,
Is delving through the snaw, Geordie.
Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

The lads o' Westmoreland came up,
An' wow but they were braw, Geordie,
But took the spavie in their houghs,
An' limpit fast awa', Geordie.
Oh had ye seen them at their posts,
Wi' backs against the wa', Geordie,
Ye wad hae thought—it matters not—
Flee over seas awa', Geordie!
Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

These Highland dogs, wi' hose an' brogs,
They dree nae cauld at a', Geordie;
Their hides are tanned like Kendal bend,
An' proof to frost an' snaw, Geordie.
They dive like moudies in the yird,
Like squirrels mount a wa', Geordie;
An' auld Carlisle, baith tower an' pile,
Has got a waesome fa', Geordie.
Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

Brave Sir John Pennington is fled,
An' Doctor Waugh an' a', Geordie;
And Humphrey Stenhouse he is lost,
And Aeron-bank's but raw, Geordie.
And Andrew Pattison's laid bye,
The prince of provosts a', Geordie;
'Tis hard to thole, for gallant soul,
His frostit thumbs to blaw, Geordie.
Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

Prince Charlie Stuart's ta'en the road,
As fast as he can ca', Geordie,
The drones to drive frae out the hive,
An' banish foreign law, Geordie.
He's o'er the Mersey, horse an' foot,
An' braid claymores an' a', Geordie;
An' awsome forks, an' Highland durks,
An' thae's the warst of a', Geordie.
Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

I canna tell, ye ken yoursell,
  Your faith, an' trust, an' a', Geordie;
But 'tis o'er true your cause looks blue,
  'Tis best to pack awa', Geordie.
An' ye maun tak your foreign bike,
  Your Turks, an' queans, an' a', Geordie,
To pluff an' trig your braw new wig,
  An' your daft pow to claw, Geordie.
    Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

There's ae thing I had maist forgot,
  Perhaps there may be twa, Geordie:
Indite us back, when ye gang hame,
  How they received you a', Geordie.
An' tell us how the lang-kail thrive,
  An' how the turnips raw, Geordie;
An' how the seybos an' the leeks
  Are brairding through the snaw, Geordie.
    Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

That Hanover's a dainty place,
  It suits you to a straw, Geordie,
Where ane may tame a buxom dame,
  An' chain her to a wa', Geordie.
An' there a man may burn his cap,
  His hat, an' wig, an' a', Geordie;
They're a' sae daft, your scanty wits
  Will ne'er be miss'd ava, Geordie.
    Up an' rin awa', Geordie, &c.

You've lost the land o' cakes an' weir,
  Auld Caledonia, Geordie;
Where fient a stand in a' the land,
  Your Whigs can mak ava, Geordie.
Then tak leg-bail, an' fare-ye-weel,
  Your motley group an' a', Geordie;
There's mony a ane has rued the day
  That ye came here ava, Geordie.
    Up an' rin awa', Geordie,
    Up an' rin awa', Geordie,
  For fient a stand in all England
    Your Whigs dare mak ava, Geordie!

I'll no wake wi' Annie.

O mother, tell the laird o't,
  Or sairly it will grieve me, O,
That I'm to wake the ewes the night,
  And Annie's to gang wi' me, O.
I'll wake the ewes my night about,
  But ne'er wi' ane sae saucy, O,
Nor sit my lane the lee-lang night
  Wi' sic a scornfu' lassie, O:
    I'll no wake, I'll no wake,
      I'll no wake wi' Annie, O;
    Nor sit my lane o'er night wi' ane
      Sae thraward an' uncanny, O!

Dear son, be wise an' warie,
  But never be unmanly, O;
I've heard ye tell another tale
  Of young an' charming Annie, O.
The ewes ye wake are fair enough,
  Upon the brae sae bonnie, O;
But the laird himsell wad gie them a'
  To wake the night wi' Annie, O.
    He'll no wake, he'll no wake,
      He'll no wake wi' Annie, O;
    Nor sit his lane o'er night wi' ane
      Sae thraward an' uncanny, O!

I tauld ye ear', I tauld ye late,
  That lassie wad trapan ye, O;
An' ilka word ye boud to say
  When left alane wi' Annie, O.
Take my advice this night for ance,
  Or beauty's tongue will ban ye, O,
An' sey your leal auld mother's skill
  Ayont the muir wi' Annie, O.
    He'll no wake, he'll no wake,
      He'll no wake wi' Annie, O,
    Nor sit his lane o'er night wi' ane
      Sae thraward an' uncanny, O!

The night it was a simmer night,
  An' oh the glen was lanely, O!
For just ae sternie's gowden e'e
  Peep'd o'er the hill serenely, O.
The twa are in the flow'ry heath,
  Ayont the muir sae flowy, O,
An' but ae plaid atween them baith,
  An' wasna that right dowie, O?
    He maun wake, he maun wake,
      He maun wake wi' Annie, O;
    An' sit his lane o'er night wi' ane
      Sae thraward an' uncanny, O!

Neist morning at his mother's knee
  He blest her love unfeign'dly, O;
An' aye the tear fell frae his e'e,
  An' aye he clasp'd her kindly, O.
"Of a' my griefs I've got amends,
  In yon wild glen sae grassy, O;
A woman only woman kens—
  Your skill has won my lassie, O.
    I'll aye wake, I'll aye wake,
      I'll aye wake wi' Annie, O,
    An' sit my lane ilk night wi' ane
      Sae sweet, sae kind, an' canny, O!"

Dennis Delany.

In sweet Tipperary, the pride of the throng,
I have danced a good jig, and have sung a good song;
On the green, as I caper'd, I scarce bent the grass—
To a bottle a friend—and no foe to a lass.
At hurling, my fellow could never be found,
For whoever I jostled soon came to the ground;
And the girls all swore that they ne'er could meet any
Could tickle their fancy like Dennis Delany.

CHORUS.

With my whack about, see it out, Dennis my jewel,
Och! why will you leave us? How can you be cruel?
Paddy Whack may go trudge it, and Murtoch O'Blaney,
We'll part with them all for dear Dennis Delany.

Young Sheelah O'Shannon was so fond of me,
That whenever we met we could never agree;
Says I, "My dear Sheelah, we'll soon end the fray,
For no longer in sweet Tipperary I'll stay."
When the girls all found I was going to leave them,
They swore that from death the world could not save them;
"Oh, we'll leave all our friends, though ever so many,
If you'll let us go with you, swaite Dennis Delany!"
With my whack about, &c.

To the road then I went, and I trudged it along,
And, by way of being silent, I lilted a song;
"Hey for Dublin!" says I, "where I'll see the fine lasses,
Get married, and drink, and ne'er mind how time passes."
But when I arrived, and found every lady
Short-waisted—thinks I, They are married already:
"By my shoul, now," says I, "marriage here is the fashion,
To breed young recruits for defence of the nation."
With my whack about, &c.

To the grand panorama that every one talks of,
Away then I goes and immediately walks off;
But I were astonished, as much as e'er man was,
To see a sea-fight on an ocean of canvas.
But some were a-weeping, and some were a-wailing,
Where Dublin once stood to see ships now a-sailing;
But what in my mind made it still seem the stranger,
Though I stood in the midst, I stood out of all danger.
With my whack about, &c.

Then to see a fine play, which I ne'er saw before,
To Crow Street I went, without three or four more;
And up stairs I walk'd, for to see things the better,
And bought a play-bill, though I knew not a letter.
But the crowd was so great, and the players so funny,
I laugh'd more, I'm sure, than the worth of my money;
But the boys went all mad, and I maddest of any,
When all the musicians play'd Dennis Delany.
With their whack about, &c.

A Ballad about Love.

I ainee fell in love wi' a sweet young thing,
A bonnie bit flower o' the wilder'd dell;
Her heart was as light as bird on the wing,
And her lip was as ripe as the moorland bell.
She never kend aught o' the ways o' sin.
Though whiles her young heart began to doubt
That wi' its ill paths she might fa' in,
But never—she never did find them out.

She oft had heard tell o' love's dear pain,
An' how sae sair as it was to dree;
She tried it and tried it again and again,
But it never could wring a tear frae her e'e.
She tried it ainee on a mitherless lamb
That lay in her bosom, and fed on her knee;
But it turned an unpurpose and beggarly ram,
And her burly lover she doughtna see.

She tried it neist on a floweret gay,
And oh! it was sweet and lovely of hue;
But it droopit its head, an' fadit away,
An' left the lassie to look for a new.
An' aye she cried, oh! what shall I do!
Why canna a lassie be happy her lane?
I find my heart maun hae something to loe,
An' I dinna ken where to fix it again.

The laverock loes her musical mate,
The moorcock loes the mottled moor-hen;
The blackbird lilts it early an' late,
A-wooing his love in the birken glen;
The yammering tewit and gray curlew,
Hae ilk ane lovers around to flee,
An' please their hearts wi' their whillie—la—lu—
But there's naething to wheedle or sing to me.

Quo' I, my sweet, my innocent flower,
The matter's as plain as plain can be,
That this heart o' mine it was made for yours,
An' yours was made for loving o' me.
The lassie she lookit me in the face,
An' a tear o' pity was in her e'e,
For she thought I had lost a' sense o' grace,
An' every scrap o' fair modestye.

The lassie she thought an' thought again,
An' lookit to heaven if aught she saw,
For she thought that man was connectit wi' sin,
And that love for him was the warst of a'.
She lookit about, but she didna speak,
As lightly she trippit out-ower the lea;
But there was a smile on her rosy cheek.
That tauld of a secret dear to me.

The lassie gaed hame to her lanely dell,
It never was lovelier to her view;
An' aye she thought an' thought to hersell,
An' the mair she thought she began to rue—
If ilk sweet thing has a' mate o' its ain,
Wi' nature's law I e'en maun gang;
I never was made for living my lane—
The laddie was right an' I was wrang.

O Nature! we a' maun yield to thee;
Your regal sway gainsay wha can?
For you made beauty, an' beauty maun be
The polar star o' the heart o' man.
There's beauty in man's commanding frame;
There's beauty in earth, in air, an' sea;
But there never was beauty that tongue could name
Like the smile of love in a fond young e'e.

The Lord of Balloch.

The eagle flew over the Laggan Loch,
And down by the braes of Badenoch,
And eastward, eastward sped his way,
Far over the lovely links of Spey;
Till the lord of Balloch turn'd his eye
To the haughty journeyer of the sky,
And he said to his henchman, "Gill-na-omb,
What brings the eagle so far from home?"

Then Gillion watch'd his lord's dark eye,
And his voice it falter'd in reply;
And he said, "My lord, who needs to care
For the way of the eagle in the air?
Perhaps he is watching Lochdorbin's men,
Or the track of the Gordons of the Glen,
For he spies, from his stories of the wind,
That the dead are often left behind;
Or, haply, he knows, in our forest bounds,
Of some noble stag dead of his wounds."

"Go, saddle my steed without delay:
I have mark'd yon eagle, day by day,
Still hovering over yon lonely dell—
There's a dread on my soul which I dare not tell.
Gillion, no mystery may I brook,
I like not your suspicious look,
And have noted your absence from my hand
More than I approve or understand;
Say, have you heard no word at all
Of some one miss'd from her father's hall?"

"No, my good lord—No, not one word,
As I shall be sworn upon my sword;
And why should the eagle's yelling din
Awake suspicions your heart within?"

That lord he mounted his gallant steed,
But at his henchman he shook his head,
And gave him a look as bounding away,
That fill'd his black heart with dismay;
And he fled to hide in the bosky burn,
For he durst not wait his lord's return.

The lord of Balloch away is gone,
With beating heart, to the wild alone:
For in the dead of night he had dream'd
Of that dell o'er which the eagle scream'd,
And there, with his mortal eye, had seen
A vision of terror and of teen:
And something was borne on his soul oppress'd,
Of a deed that would never be redress'd;
For there are sprites that the truth can scan,
And whisper it to the soul of man.

The eagle he sail'd upon the cloud,
And he spread his wings, and scream'd aloud,
For he durst not light in the lonely dell.
But his rage made all the echoes yell;
For he saw the blood below his feet,
And he saw it red, and he knew it sweet,
And though death was pleasing to his eye.
The silken tartans stream'd too nigh.

The lord of Balloch rode on and on,
With a heavy gloom his heart upon,
Till his stead began to show demur,
For he snorted and refused the spur,
And, nor for coaxing nor for blow,
Farther one step he would not go;
He rear'd aloft and he shook with fear,
And his snorting was terrible to hear:
The gallant steed is left behind,
And the chief proceeds with a troubled mind.

But short way had that good lord gone,
Ere his heart was turn'd into a stone;
It was not for nought that the steed rebell'd:
It was not for nought that the eagle yell'd;
It was not for nought that the visions of night
Presented that lord with a grievous sight—
A sight of misery and despair:
But I dare not tell what he found there!
For the hearts of the old would withhold belief,
And the hearts of the young would bleed with grief,
Till the very fountains of life ran dry!
Sweet sleep would forsake the virgin's eye,
And man, whose love she had learn'd to prize,
Would appear a monster in disguise—
A thing of cursed unhallow'd birth,
Unfit to dwell on his Maker's earth;
The very flowers of the wilder'd dell
Would blush, were I that tale to tell!

Ah! the clan of Lochdorbin for ever may rue
That the dream and its ending proved so true,
For twenty ruffians of that dome,
And at their head base Gill-na-omb,
Were hung by the necks around that dell,
To bleach in the snows and rains that fell:
And there they swung the wild within,
Till the dry bones rattled in the skin;
And they hung, and they hung, till all was gone
Save a straggling skull and white back-bone—
A lesson to men of each degree,
How sacred the virgin form should be.

As for Lochdorbin's brutal chief,
He was pinion'd like a common thief,
And cast into a dungeon deep
Below the Balloch castle-keep,
Where he pined to death, there not the first
Who had died of hunger and of thirst.
On his own flesh he strove to dine,
And drank his blood instead of wine,
Then groan'd his sicken'd soul away,
Cursing the lord of Balloch's sway,
And wishing, with dying grin and roar,
That twenty maidens, and twenty more,
Were in his power in the lonely dell,
And all by that lord beloved as well.

He is gone—extinct, and well-away!
His castle's a ruin unto this day,
And neither the shepherd nor hind can tell
The name of the chief that there did dwell;

And all that remains of that cruel beast,
Who laid the Buchan and Bogie waste,
Are some shreds of bones in the Balloch keep,
Still kick'd about in that dungeon deep:
Or haply some films of dust enshrined,
Whirl'd on the eddies of the wind.
So perish all from noble range,
Who would wrong a virgin for revenge![1]

The Miser's Warning.

There was a carle, right worldly wise,
  Wha died without remede,
Yet fought his way to paradise
  After that he was dead.
And the first soul that he met there,
Was of a maiden, mild and fair,
Wha once had fallen into a snare,
  Whilk led to evil deed.

"Oh, Mrs. Madam!" cried John Græme,
  "I wonder mightilye
How leddy of such evil fame
  Gat into this countrye!
If such as you get footing here,
Then auld John Græme hath cause to fear
He hath the wrong sow by the ear,
  And sore dismay'd is he.

"Is this a place of blessedness,
  Or is it a place of woe;
Or is it a place of middle space,
  That lies between the two?
For there's a mildness in your mien,
And blitheness in your bright blue eyne,
Whilk certes sennil should be seen,
  Where wicked dames do go."

"Oho, John Græme! are you but there?
  Did you ne'er hear of this,
That everilk place where spirits fare
  To them is place of bliss?
That men and women, by God's might,
Were framed with spirits beaming bright,
Stepping from darkness into light,
  Though sunk in sin's abyss?

"A thousand years, or thousands ten,
  Not reckon'd once can be;
The immortal spirit rises on
  To all eternitye;
It rises on, or more or less,
In knowledge and in happiness,
Progressing still to purer bliss,
  That end can never see."

John shook his head, and primm'd his mou,
  And claw'd his lug amain,
And says, "Fair dame, if this be true,
  How comes it men have lain
In darkness to their spirit's frame,
Their Maker's manage and his aim,
Quhill lighten'd by ane sinful dame,
  When light can prove no gain!

"Sooth, it is ane pleasant doctrine
  For wicked hearts, I trow,
And suits the lordly libertine,
  And ladies such as you——"
Then the fair dame, with witching wile,
Upraised her eyne, withouten guile,
Flung back her locks, and smiled a smile,
  And says, "How judgest thou?

"Is it for sauntering, sordid sot,
  A hypocritic craven,
Say who is wicked, and who is not,
  And widdershin with Heaven?
Do you not know in heart full well,
That if there is a burning hell,
You do deserve the place yoursell,
  As well as any leevin'?

"You judge like men, and judge amiss,
  Of simple maiden's crime,
But through temptations fathomless,
  You cannot see a styme.
Through dark and hidden snares of sin,
And warnings of the soul within,
The eyne of mortal may not win,
  Within the bounds of time.

"But would you know what brought me here,
  To this calm world of thought,
It was the sad and silent tear,
  That sweet repentance brought;
Of all the things on earth that be
Whilk God and angels love to see,
It is the heart's deep agonye
For souls so dearly bought.

"'Tis that which brings the heavenly bliss
  Down like the morning dew,
On lost sheep of the wilderness,
  Its longings to renew,
Till the poor lamb that went astray
In vice's wild and witless way,
Is led, as by an heavenly ray,
  The light of life to view.

[1] The scene of this ancient and horrible legend seems to have been in the country of the Grants, whose chief may have been the Lord of Balloch. In the same district, also, there is an ancient castle, or rather garrison, of great strength and magnificence, called Lochindorb. It is situated on an island. Its walls are twenty feet thick, and it covers fully an acre of ground. It has a spacious entrance of hewn stone, and strong watch-towers at each corner. The inhabitants of the district can give no account of it, but say it was the residence of a great cateran chief, who was put down by the Earl of Moray and the Laird of Grant. Another account is, that he and all his followers were surprised, and cut off to a man, by the Laird of Grant. It is not improbable that this cateran chief may have been one of King Edward's officers.

"And let me tell you, auld John Græme,
Though here you seem to be,
You have through darkness, flood, and flame,
A weary weird to dree,
Unless you do, at God's command,
Repent of all your sins off hand,
Whilk in your hateful native land
Have grievous been to see.

"A greater sinner was not born
In dale of fair Scotland:
You know you stole Jock Laidlaw's corn,
And broke his heart and hand.
And though men knew you were foresworn,
Yet, when his family fell forlorn,
You treated their complaint with scorn,
And broke them from the land.

"Oh fie, John Græme! you sordid slave!
It sets you weel to crack:
You cheating, lying, scurvy knave,
Your heart is raven black!
Instead of a progressive pace,
In virtue, knowledge, and in grace,
Thou art lagging everilk day and space,
And fearfully gone back.

"And there's a thraldom biding thee,
Thine heart cannot conceive,
Worried a thousand years to be,
Without the least reprieve.
Time was—time is—but will not be,
For, when I pass from warning thee,
An angel, with thy death's decree,
The yetts of heaven shall leave."

"Alake!" says John, "it grieves me sore,
Short mercy I shall find;
I thought I had been dead before,
But how I cannot mind.
Much to repentance I incline,
And I could pray, and I could whine:
But to give back what now is mine,
To that I shall not bind."

Then John knelt down in humble way
Upon the sward of heaven,
And pray'd as loud as man could pray,
That he might be forgiven.
"John!" cried his wife, who lay awake,
"What horrid din is this you make?
Get up, old braying brock, and take
Some breath to end this stevin."

"Whisht, wife!" says John, "for I am dead,
And praying on the sky.
What's this? I know my soul is fled,
Or very soon must fly;
For there is an angel on the way;
How long he takes, I cannot say;
But or to-morrow, or to-day,
Poor old John Græme must die:

"And, wife, we must repent for life,
And all men's goods restore."
"The fiend be there, then!" quod the wife—
"Though they were ten times more.
'Tis good to keep the grip one hath,
Either for life, or yet for death.
Repent and pray while you have breath,
And all your sins give o'er;

"And take your chance, like many a ship,
And many a better man."
John rose, and swore he would restore:
And syne begoud to bann
All wicked wives, of bad intent,
Who would not let their men repent,
Without their froward cursed consent,
That hell might them trepan.

John look'd at all his ewes and kye—
Oh! they were fair to see:
His gold he counted three times bye;
The tear blinded his ee:
But still he swore he would restore,
And blamed the wife, and wept full sore,
Counting his treasure o'er and o'er,
And graening grievouslye.

They yermit and flaitte a summer's day,
Of what was to be done;
And just as spread the gloaming gray,
Behind the setting sun,
The angel with the warrant came;
John felt his vitals in a flame;
Ghastly he stared upon his dame,
But langnage he had none.

He gave a shiver, and but one,
And still his gold he eyed:
He pointed to it—gave a groan—
And as he lived he died,
The slave of that o'erpowering vice,
That dead'ning, craving AVARICE,
That turns the human heart to ice,
Unblest, unsatisfied.

This carle was hated while he lived,
Unwept when he was gone;
But where he went, or how received,
To me was not made known.
But on this truth I can recline,
That he's where mercy's rays combine—
In better hands nor his or mine,
Which men will not disown.

Lyttil Pynkie.

Lyttil Pynkie came to Kilbogye yett,
It wals on ane hallow-day;
And the ladye babyis with her mette,
To heirre quhat sho wolde say.

For Pynkie wals the lyttilest bairne,
That ever dancit on the greinne;
And Pynkie wals the bonnyest thynge
That evir on yirthe wals seinne.

Hir faice wals caste in beautye's molde,
And ower hir browe abone
Hir hayre wals lyke the streemys of golde
That tinssillis from the mone.

The smyle that playit upon hir faice
Wals comely to be seene,
And the bonnye blue that dyit the hevin
Wals nevir lyke Pynkie's eeyne.

Thre spannis from heelle to heidde sho stode,
But all so meitte to se,
No mayden in hir myldest mode
Ane lovelier forme colde bee.

Quhatever lookit at hir ane spaice,
Colde nevir ealle to mynde
That she possessit not fraime and graice
Of stateliest womankynde.

The baronne caime forth to the greene,
And hee toke hir be the hande;
"Lyttil Pynkie, you are welcome heirre,
The flower of fayre Scotlande.

"You are welcome to myne bowris, Pynkie,
And to myne hallis so gaye,
And you shalle be myne lammie deirre,
And I'll fondle you nyehte and daye."

"Och, no! Och, no! myne owne gode lorde,
For that wolde bee ane synne;
For if you toye or melle with me,
To hevin you'll nevir wynne."

"But I will taike myne chaunce, Pynkie,
For lofe is sore to thole;
The joie of maydenis leifu' charmis
Can nevir stayne the soule."

"Better to thole than wynne the goale,
Quhare pryze is nonne before;
The man quha wynnis myne lofe and mee,
Will nevir knowe mayden more.

"But I will syng ane sang to you,
And daunce ane fairye quheille,
Till you and all youre bonny may bairnis
Can daunce it wonder weille."

Were I to telle Lyttil Pynkie's sang,
It mighte doo muckle ill;
For it wals not fraimit of yirthly wordis,
Though it soundit sweitte and shrill.

But aye the owerworde of the sang
Which ladyis lernit to syng,
Wals, "Rounde and rounde, and sevin tymis rounde
The elfynis fairye ryng!"

The firste moove that Lyttil Pynkie maide,
Wals gentil, softe, and sweitte;
But the seconde rounde Lyttil Pynkie maide,
Theye colde not kenne hir feitte.

The thrydde rounde that Lyttil Pynkie maide,
Sho shymmerit als lycht and gaye
Als dauncyng of the wiry lychtis
On warme and sonnye daye.

And aye sho sang, with twyrle and spang,
Arounde them on the playne,
Quhille hir feitte theye shymmerit abone theyre heddis,
Then kyssit the swairde agayne.

Then the baronne hee begoude to bobbe,
No longer colde hee stande,
And his lyttil maydenis in ane ryng
They joynit him hande to hande.

And rounde and rounde, and faster rounde,
The fairye ryng theye flewe;
And aye the langer that theye daunsit,
The madder on fonne theye grewe.

And Lyttil Pynkie in the middis
Bobbyt lyke ane flee in Maye,
And everilk spryng Lyttil Pynkie gaif,
The baronne he cryit "Hurraye!"

And rounde and rounde the fairye ryng
They lyltit and they sang,
And rounde and rounde the fairye ryng
They caiperit and they flang;

Quhille the baronne hee begoude to gaspe,
And his eeyne sette in his heidde;
Hee colde not dragg ane oder lymbe,
So neirlye hee wals deidde,
And downe he felle upon the playne,
Prone lyke ane forme of leidde.

But aye quhan Pynkie made ane spryng
Betweinne him and the daye,
Hee maide a paulle with handis and feitte,
And gaif ane faynte "Hurraye!"

Hee streikit out his lymbis in dethe,
Unpytied and unbleste;
But "Hurraye!" it wals the ae laste sounde
That gurglit in his breste.

The maydis theye daunsit and caiperit on
In madnesse and in blaime:
For lofe or stryffe, or dethe or lyffe,
To them wals all the saime.

But rounde and rounde the ryng theye flewe,
Swyfte als sevin burdis on wyng;
Regairdyng the deidde man no more
Than any yirthly thyng.

The menialis gadderit rounde, and sawe
In terrour and dismaye,
Them dauncyng rounde theyre deidde fader,
And Pynkie wals awaye.

"Och-on, och-on," the chaiplyng eryit,
"There's some enchauntmente heirre;
Haiste, haiste awaye, myne maydinis gaye,
This shaimefulle course forbeirre."

The maydinis lefte the fairye ryng,
And ceissit theyre lychtsome fonne,
But theye colde not comprehende one thyng
Of all that had beinne donne.

The chaiplyng ranne into the ryng
To lifte his maisteris heidde,
And callit on six young bordlye wychtis,
To beirre awaye the deidde;

Quhan Lyttil Pynkie in the myddis
Stode lofelye als the sonne;
Sho sang ane staife, and daunceit it rounde,
And all theyre grieffe wals donne.

The chaiplyng hee begoude to bobbe,
And wagg his heede amayne,
For the lyttil kymmeris lythlye lymbis
Had veirlye turnit his brayne.

And rounde and rounde the deidde baronne,
With eaiper and with squealle,
The chaiplyng and his six young menne
Wente lyke ane spynnyng quheille.

And ay they sang Lyttil Pynkie's sang,
Als loudde als they colde braye;
But saife the burden of that sang,
The wordis I daurna saye.

But ay quhan Pynkie made ane ryse,
With fitfulle fairye flyng;
"Agayne, agayne!" the chaiplyng eryit,
"Weille profen, myne bonnye thyng!

"Agayne, agayne! Agayne, agayne!"
In maddenyng screimme eryit hee,
"Och, let mee se that spryng agayne,
That I of lofe maye de!"

And rounde and rounde the deidde baronne
Theye flapperit and theye flewe;
And rounde and rounde the deidde baronne
Theye bumpyt and theye blewe;

Quhill the chaiplyng hee begoude to gaspe
And quhizle in the throtte,
And downe hee felle upon the greinne
Lyke ane greate mardel stotte.

He streikit out his laithlye lymbis,
His eeyne sette in his heidde,
But "Agayne, agayne!" caime with ane ryfte,
Quhill after hee wals deidde.

Then all the lande togedder ranne
To prieste and holy fryer,
And there wals prayeris in every kirke,
And hymnis in every quire;

For Lyttil Pynkie helde hir plaice
At lordlye Kilbogye,
And of everilk chamber in the housse
Lyttil Pynkie keepit the ke.

So wordis gone eiste and wordis gone weste,
From Solwaye unto the Clyde,
And wordis gone to the greate Mass John
That livit on Cloudan syde.

So he is awaye to Kilbogye halle
These lordlys maidis to saive,
And conjure that wylde thyng away
Into the Reidd Sea's wave.

Quhan he caime to Kilbogye yette
He tirlit at the pynne,
And quha wals so readdye als Lyttil Pynkie
To ryse and let him in.

"Bairne, I haif wordis to say to you
On matter most sincere;
Quhare is the countreye you caime frome,
And quha wals it sente you heirre?"

"I caime from ane countreye farre awaye,
A regioune caulme and sweitte,
For all the sternis of the milky waye
Werre farre benethe our feitt.

"But I haif romit this yirthlye sphere
Some vyrgin soulis to wynne,
Sincee maydis were born the slaives of love,
Of sorrowe, and of synne;

"By nychte and daye and glomyng graye,
By grofe and greinwode tree;
Oh, if you kennit quhat I haif donne
To keippe them fayre and free!

"I haif satte upon theyre waifyng lockis
Als daunceyng on the greinne,
And watchit the blushes of the cheeke,
And glances of the eeyne.

"I have whysperit dremys into theyre eirris,
Of all the snairis of lofe;
And coolit theyre yong and hopyng brestis
With dewis distyllit abofe."

"But O thou wylde and wycked thyng,
Thynk of this virgyn bande;
Thou'st taiken theyre fader from theyre heid,
Theyre pastor from theyre hand."

"That fader wals ane man so wylde,
Disgraice of human fraime;
Hee keipit sevin lemanis in his halle,
And maide it house of shaime;
And his fat chaiplyng—worste of alle,
Theyre dedis I maye not naime.

"Before ane of those maydis had blomit
In lofely laidyhode,
Each wold haif loste hir quhite cleethyng,
But and her sylken snode.

"Then blaime me not now, good Mass John,
For workyng of this skaithe;
It wals the mennis besettyng synne
That tosted them to dethe.

"But now, Mass John, I know you are
A gude man and ane true;
Therefore I yield my vyrgin chairge
With plesure up to you.

"For oh there is moche for me to doo
'Mong maydenis mylde and meike;
Men are so wycked heire belowe,
And wemyng are so weake.

"But I will baithe your eeyne, Mass John,
With unguent of the skye;
And you shall heirre with oder eirre,
And se with oder eye.

"And you shall se the richte and wrong,
With soule of dredde withynne;
Quhat habitantis you dwelle amang,
Quhat worlde you sojourne in."

Sho touchit his eye, sho touchit his eirre,
With unguent of the skye,
Distillit from flowris of hevinlye boweris,
That nevir nevir die.

Mass John hee turnit him rounde aboute,
To se quhat hee colde se;
"Quhat's this! quhat's this!" cryit goode Mass John,
"Quhat hath befallen mee!

"For outhir I am sounde asleippe,
And in ane feirsome dreime;
Or else I'm deidde, and gane to hevin,
Which raither wolde beseime.

"For spyritis come and spyritis go,
Of eviry shaipe and shaide,
With ghostis and demonis not ane few;
Sothe, I am sore afrayde!

"Quhare is—quhare is Lyttil Pynkie gone?
I cannot brooke this payne;—
Oh! taik this oyntment off myne eeyne,
And maike mee blynde agayne.

"How can I live, or moove, or thynk
With spyritis to congree;
I no acquaintance haif of them,
And they haif nonne of mee!"

But Lyttil Pynkie she wals gane
Awaye by daille and glenne,
To guarde the vyrginis of the lande
From wylis of wycked menne;

And goode Mass John is lefte alone
'Mang spyritis of everilk hue;
There were spyritis blacke, and spyritis quhyte,
And spyritis greene and blue;

And theye were moovyng too and fro
'Mang thyngis of mortal birthe,
Als thicke als burdis upon the bough,
Or human thyngis on yirth.

Eache vyrgin had ane guardian fere,
Als fayre als flowir of Maye;
And hee himself ane great blacke dougge
That wolde not pass awaye.

And some had devilis to bee theyre maitis,
And some had two or thre,
That playit soche prankis with maydis and sanctis,
As wals ane shaime to se.

And then the dougge—the great blacke dougge,
Kept lokyng in his faice,
With many a dark and meanyng scowlle,
And many a sly grimaice.

It wals ane lyffe hee colde not brooke,
He wals so hard bestedde;
He colde not preiche, hee colde not praye—
He colde not sleippe in bedde;

For evin within the haly kirke,
By that amaizyng spelle,
He saw some scenis before his faice
Als I can hardlye telle.

Soche als ane spyrit spreddyng clothe
Before ane tailoris eeyne;
And hee wals steillyng in his herte,
Trowing hee wals not seene.

And some wolde shaike ane mychtie purse
Before the courtieris sychte,
Quha solde his countrye for the saime
With very greate delychte.

And some were throwyng cairdis and dysse
To many a drowsye wychte,
Quha playit and cursit, and cursit and playit,
Before theyre pastoris sychte.

And some were wooyng maydinis dynke
With sylkis and satynis fyne,
And some with vowis and wycked teris,
Ane very deirre propyne.

And some were tyckelling maydinis oulde
With thoughtis of manlye youth;
Yea, half the scenis the kirke withynne
Were synnfulle and uncouthe.

Mass John aft tryit to close his eeyne,
And shutte them from his sychte;
For there were prankis so very drolle,
Theye maide him laugh outrychte.

There wals no thoughtis withynne the hertis,
Though secret and untolde,
But theye were acted in his sychte
By spyritis manifolde.

He wyshed for dethe, and colde not lie
Suche strange enchantment under,
Thus wanderyng with a spyritis eye
Amid a worlde of wonder.

For manne moste be ane mortyl thyng,
With ane immortyl mynde,
Or passe the dore of dethe, and leive
Mortalitye behynde.

So goode Mass John longit fervently
That lyffe with him were donne,
To mix with spyritis or with menne,
But only with the onne.

And then the dougge, the greate blacke dougge,
Wals ever in his plaice;
Evin at the altar there it stode,
And stairit him in the faice.

Mass John wente home and layit him downe,
And soone wals with the deidde,
And the bonnye maydis of Kilbogye
Are lefte withoute ane heidde.

Quhan sevin long yeris had come and passit,
With blynke and showir awaye,
Then Lyttil Pynkie sho caime backe
Upon ane Hallow-daye.

But the straynis that Lyttil Pynkie sung
At settyng of the sonne,
Were nevir forgotte by old or young,
Quhill lyffe with them wals donne.

Quhat then wals sayit, or quhat wals donne,
No mynstrelle evir knewe;
But the bonnye maydis of Kilbogye
With beauty blomit anewe.

Some demyt that theye wolde pass awaye
To oder lande than this;
But they lyvit the lyvis that wemyng lofe,
Of sociale yirthlie blisse.

But many a taille in westlande daille,
Quainte rhyme and fairye laye,
There yet remaynis of Pynkie's straynis,
Upon the Hallow-daye.

The Two Men of Colston;

OR THE TRUE ENGLISH CHARACTER.

Returning to my old friends the Jacobites again, I venture to present my readers with three pretended Cumberland ones, which I introduced in an old Magazine as follows:—"Two Scotsmen come to a poor widow's house in Cumberland, in search of old songs, having heard that she was in possession of some. She tells them that she has plenty, but that they were all written by her *brwother Twommy*, and proceeds to say, 'Whoy, didst thou neaver heaur of Twommy? I thowt all Cooamberland had knwoan brwother Twommy. Him wos a swart oof, a keynd of a dwomony, whoy had mwore lear nwor wot to guyde it; and they ca'd him the leympyng dwomony, for heym wos a creypple all the days of heym's layfe. A swort of a treyfling nicky-nacky bwody he wos, and neiver had the pooar to dey a gude turn eyther to the sel o' heym, or wony yan belaunged till heym. Aweel, thou'lt no hender Twommy, but he'll patch up a' the feyne ould sangs i' the weyde warld, and get them prentit in a beuk. And sae, efter he had spent the meast pairt o' him's leyfe gathering and penning, he gyangs his ways to Caril, whoy but he, to maik a greyt fortune. Whew! the prenter woad neaver look at nowther heym nor his lawlyess syangs. Twommy was very erwoss than, and off he sets wey them crippling all the way till Edinborough, and he woffers them till a measter prenter for a greyte swom of mwoney. Ney, he would nae byite! Then he woffers them till anwother measter prenter. He wos reather better, for he woffered Twommy a beauk o' prented syangs for his wretten yans. 'Wow, Twommy, man!' quoth I, 'but thou wast a great feul no till chap him, for then thou wadst hae had a beuk that every body could heave read, wheyras thou hast now neything but a batch o' scrawls, that nay body can read but the sell o' thee.' Twommy brought heame his beauk o' grand syangs yance myair; but at last there cwoms a Scots chap to Caril, speering after coar Twommy's syangs, and then, peur man, he was up as heyly as the wund, expecting to pouch the hale mony o' the keuntrey. But afore the Scots gentleman came back, there cwomes anwother visitor, by the bye, and that was Mr. Palsy, and he teuk off peur Twommy leyke the shot of a gun, and then all his grand schemes war gyane leyke a blast o' wunn. The syangs are all to the fore, and for ney euse, that I can sey, but meaking sloughs to the wheeal spindle.'"[1]

"Whoy, Josey mon, where be'st thou gwoing
Woth all thyne own horses and keye,
With thy pocks on thy back, leyke a pether,
And bearnies and baggage forby?"
"Whoy, dom it, mun, wost thou nwot hearing
Of all the bwad news that are out,
How that the Scwots rascals be cwoming
To reave all our yauds and our nout?

"So I's e'en gwoing up to the muirlands,
Amang the weyld floshes to heyde,
With all my heall haudding and gyetting,
For fear that the worst should betyde.
Lword, mon! hast thou neaver been hearing,
There's nonghts bwot the deavil to pay,
There's a pwope cwoming down fro' the Heylands,
To herry, to bworn, and to slay?

"He has mwore nor ten thwosand meale weyming,
The fearswomest creatures of all,
They call them rebellioners—dom them!
And cannie-bulls swome do them call.
Whoy, mon, they eat Chreastians lyke robbits,
And bworn all the chworches for fwon;
And we're all to be mwordered togyther,
Fro' the bearn to the keyng on the thrwone.

"Whoy, our keyng he sends out a greyt general,
With all his whole army, nwo less;
And what dwoes this pwope and his menzie?
Whoy, Twommy mon, feath thou'lt nwot guess?
Whoy, they fwalls all a-rworing and yelling,
Leyke a pack of mad hounds were there gowls;
And they cwomes wopen-mouth on our swodgers,
And eats them wop, bwodies and sowls!

"Whoy, Heaster, what deavil's thou dwoing?
Come, caw up the yaud woth the cart;
Let us heast out to Bwarton's weyld shieling,
For my blood it runs cold at my heart.

[1] The two other songs, "Red Clan-Ranald's Men" and "Up an' rin awa', Geordie," will be found in a different part of this collection.

So fare thee weal, Twommy—I's crying—
  Commend me to Mwoll and thyne wyfe;
If thou see'st oughts of Jwhonny's wee Meary,
  Lword, tell her to rwon for her lyfe!"

"Whoy, Josey mon, surely thou'st raving,
  Thou'st heard the wrong seyd of the treuth;
For this is THE TRUE KEYNG that's cwoming,
  A brave and mwoch-wrong'd rwoyal yeuth.
Thou's ignorant as the yaud that thou reyd'st on,
  Or cauve that thou dreyv'st out to the lwone;
For this pwope is the Prince Charles Stuart,
  And he's cwome bwot to clayme what's his own.

"His feythers have held this ould keyngdom
  For a meatter of ten thowsand years,
Till there cwomes a bit dwom'd serwogy bwody,
  A theyvish ould rascal, I hears;
And he's stown the brave honest lad's crown fro'm,
  And kick'd him out of house and hould,
And rewin'd us all with taxations,
  And hang'd up the brave and the bwold.

"Now, Josey mon, how wod'st thou leyke it,
  If swome crabbit half-wotted lown
Should cwome and seize on thy bit haudding,
  And droyve thee fro' all that's theyne own?
And, Josey mon, how wod'st thou lyke it,
  If thou in theyne freands had swome hwope,
If they should all tworn their backs on thee,
  And call thee a thief and a pwope?"

"Whoy, Heaster, where deavil's thou gwoing,
  Thou'lt droyve the ould creature to dead;
Hould still the cart till I conseyder—
  Gyang, take the ould yaud bee the head.
Whoy, Twommy mon, what wast thou saying?
  Cwome, say't all again without feal;
If thou'lt swear unto all thou hast tould me,
  I've had the wrong sow bee the teal."

"I'll swear unto all I has tould thee,
  That this is our TRUE SOVEREIGN KEYNG:
There never was house so ill gueydit,
  And bee swuch a dwort of a theyng."
"Bwot what of the cannie-bulls, Twommy?
  That's reyther a doubtful concern;
The thoughts of these hworrid meale weeyming
  Make me tremble for Heaster and bearn!"

"They're the clans of the Nworth, honest Josey,
  As brave men as ever had breath;
They've ta'en the hard seyde of the quorrel,
  To stand by the reyght until death.
They have left all their feythers and mwothers,
  Their weyves and their sweethearts and all,
And their heames, and their dear little bearnies,
  With their true prince to stand or to fall."

"Oh, Gwod bless their sowls, honest fellows!
  Lword, Twommy! I's crying like mad!
I dwont know at all what's the matter,
  But 'tis summat of that rwoyal lad.
Hoy, Heaster! thou fusionless hussey,
  Tworn back the yaud's head towards heame;
Get wop on the top of the panniels,
  And dreyve back the rwod that thou keame.

"Now, Twommy, I's done leyke mee betters,
  I's changed seydes, and sey let that stand,
And, mwore than mwost gentles can say for,
  I've changed both with heart and with hand;
And since this lad is OUR TRUE SOVEREIGN,
  I'll geave him all that I possess,
And I'll feyght for him too, should he need it,—
  Can any true swobject do less?"

"Now geave me theyne hand, honest Josey,
  That's spoke leyke a true Englishman;
He needs but a pleyne honest stworey,
  And he'll dwo what's reyght if he can.
Cwome thou down to ould Nanny Cworbat's,
  I'll give thee a quart of good brown,
And we'll dreynk to the health of Prince Charles,
  And every true man to his own."

Fragment.

Lord Huntly's sheets were like the milk,
His couch was down, his curtains silk;
Wrought on his gilded canopy
Were wolf, and hound, and fleur-de-lis;
By him the loveliest lady lay
E'er hunted deer on bank of Spey—
Nor bed of down, nor lady kind,
Brought peace or bliss to Huntly's mind.

Unearthly moans his ears assail;
He heard a suffering infant wail:—
The watch-dog howling to the gale,
The thunder's burst, the rattling hail,
The river roaring down the dale,
  All nature seemed at enmity.

Why foamed that flood from shore to shore?
Why did the volleying thunder roar?
Fierce lightnings rend the rocking tower,
And crested clouds incumbent lower
  In dark and dread condensity?
Ah, Heaven!—that lady by his side—
That lady was not Huntly's bride!

When rose the morning clear and fair,
Why did the frightened menials stare,
Each knight and squire his weapon bare,
And maidens rend their flowing hair?
What?—neither lord nor lady there!

Why o'er yon thicket's dusty ring,
Where sullen sloes and brambles cling,
Does the dark raven veering hing,
And mountain eagle flap her wing?
Ah, horror to the searching eye!
What are those mangled fragments by,
All scattered, rent, and red that lie?

Are these the limbs of prowling thief,
Of reaver stern, or robber thief?
No, all that now remains they see
Of Huntly, flower of chivalry!
For, sooth, the beauty by his side
No lady was, nor Huntly's bride.
* * * * * *

The Admonition.

Auld Geordie sat beside a board,
Wi' routh o' hamely meltith stored;
Threw aff his hat, composed his face,
An' just was thinking owre the grace,
When ae wee say that chanced to pass,
'Tween his auld wife an' only lass,
At ainee pu'ed Geordie's mind away
To something he wished lang to say.

He turned, an' wi' a fervent air,
That weel bespak a parent's care,
Soft yet severe, though kind yet keen,
He thus addressed his darling Jean;
His wife close by his elbow staid,
Assenting weel to a' he said.

"Ah lassie! thou art a' we hae,
For Heaven has left us now nae mae;
Thy ilka faut we grieve to see,
For a' our care on earth's for thee.
If ye but kend, by night an' day
How for thy guid we wish an' pray—
How sair owre thee our bosoms yearn,
Jean, ye wad be a mindfu' bairn.

"I've lately seen, an' grieved to see,
Your frequent rambles owre the lea,
When gloaming draws her fairy screen
Around the walks an' woodlands green;
When music melts in ilka grove,
An' ilka note's a note of love.
What gars ye dander out your lane,
In wrapper braw an' tippet clean,
Your hair kaimed up sae dink to see,
An' gowden curls aboon your bree?
Ah, Jean—beware, my bonnie bairn,
The book o' virtue's hard to learn!
The pleasant way aft leads to death,
The adder lurks in flowery path:
Ye needna lie—ye gang, I ken,
To meet young Jamie o' the glen;
Ye maunna do't—I trow fu' weel
Your virtue fair, your bosom leal;
But that's no a'—by night an' day,
Keep out o' sin an' danger's way.

"Oh think, if sic a thing should be,
As that these walks by greenwood tree,
These nightly danderings by the river,
Should gar us lose our bairn for ever!

"Thy health is high, thy blossom fair,
Thy spirits dance as light as air;
Yet, trust me, Jean, thou'rt lightly poising
Between the winning an' the losing:
On youthfu' passion's firm control
Depends thy fair immortal soul.

"Be guid, my bairn: ye canna be
For aye aneath a parent's e'e;
But mind there's Ane will aye be near thee,
Will ever see, will ever hear thee,
An' if thou'rt guid he'll be thy friend,
An' make thee happy i' the end."

Young Jeanie's heart was soft an' kind;
A tender thought shot through her mind;
It came unsought—an' came again—
'Twas about Jamie o' the glen:
But she was guid as she was fair,
An' i' the gloaming walked nae mair.

Red Clan-Ranald's Men

Is likewise a pretended transcript from the "Dwomony's beuk," and relates to the skirmish on Clifton Moor, on the 18th of December, 1745, where a party of M'Donalds, left to guard the baggage, so gallantly repulsed two regiments of cavalry, killing one hundred and fifty of them, and wounding more, while the Highlanders lost only twenty-four in all.

There's news—news—gallant news,
That Caril disna ken, joe;
There's gallant news of tartan trews,
And red Clan-Ranald's men, joe.
There has been blinking on the bent,
And slashing on the fell, joe;
The red-coat sparks hae got their yerks,
But Caril darena tell, joe.

The prig dragoons they swore by 'zoons,
The rebels' hides to tan, joe;
But when they fand the Highland brand,
They funkit and they ran, joe.
And had the frumpy froward duke,
Wi a' his brags o' weir, joe,
But met our Charlie hand to hand,
In a' his Highland gear, joe;

Had English might stood by the right,
As they did vaunt fu' vain, joe,
Or played the parts of Highland hearts,
The day was a' our ain, joe.
We darena say the right's the right,
Though weel the right we ken, joe;
But we dare think, and take a drink
To red Clan-Ranald's men, joe.

Afore I saw our rightfu' prince
Frae foreign foggies flee, joe,
I'd lend a hand at Cumberland
To rowe it in the sea, joe.
Come fill a cup, and fill it up,
We'll drink the toast ye ken, joe,
And add, beside, the Highland plaid,
And red Clan-Ranald's men, joe.

We'll drink to Athole's gallant band,
To Cluny of the Glen, joe,
To Donald Blue, and Appin true,
And red Clan-Ranald's men, joe:
And cry out news—our gallant news,
That Caril disna ken, joe,
Our gallant news of tartan trews,
And red Clan-Ranald's men, joe.

POEMS DESCRIPTIVE AND SENTIMENTAL.

Superstition and Grace.

There was an auld carle wonn'd under yon shaw,
His cheek was the clay, and his hair was the snaw;
His brow was as glazed as the winter night,
But mingled with lines of immortal light:
And forth from his livid lips there flew
A flame of a lurid murky hue.
But there was a mystery him within,
That roused up the twangs and terrors of sin;
And there was a gleide in that auld carle's ee,
That the saint and the sinner baith trembled to see.

But, oh! when the moor gat her coverlet gray;
When the gloaming had flaughted the night and the day;
When the craws had flown to the greenwood shaw,
And the kid blett over the Lammer Law;
When the dew had laid the valley asteep,
And the gowan had faul't her buds to sleep;
When naething was heard but the merlin's maen,
Oh, then, that gyre carle was never his lane.
A bonnie wee baby, sae meek and mild,
Then walk'd with him in the dowie wild;
But, oh! nae pen that ever grew
Could describe that baby's heavenly hue:
Yet all the barmings of sturt and strife,
And weary wailings of mortal life,
Would soon have been hush'd to endless peace
At ae blink of that baby's face.

Her brow sae fair, and her e'e sae meek,
And the pale rose bloom upon her cheek;
Her locks, and the bend of her sweet e'e bree,
And her smile, might have waken'd the dead to see.
Her snood, befringed wi' many a gem,
Was stown frae the rainbow's brightest hem;
And her rail, mair white than the snawy drift,
Was never woven aneath the lift;
It threw sic a light on the hill and the gair,
That it show'd the wild deer to her lair;
And the brown bird of the moorland fell
Upraised his head from the heather bell,
For he thought that his dawning of love and mirth,
Instead of the heaven was springing from earth;
And the fairies waken'd frae their beds of dew,
And they sang a hymn, and that hymn was new.
Oh, ladies, list! for never again
Shall you hear sic a wild, unearthly strain:
For they sang the night breeze in a swoon,
And they sang the gowd locks frae the moon;
They sang the redbreast frae the wood,
And the laverock out o' the marled cloud,
The capperkayle frae the bosky brae,
And the seraphs down frae the milky way;
And some wee feres of bloodless birth
Came out o' the worm-holes o' the earth,
And swoof'd sae lightly round the lea,
That they wadna kythe to mortal e'e;
While the eldritch sang, it rang sae shrill,
That the waesome tod yool'd on the hill:
Oh, ladies, list! for the choral band
Thus hymn'd the song of Fairy Land:

Song of the Fairies.

Sing, sing!
How shall we sing
Round the babe of the spirits' king?
How shall we sing our last adieu,
Baby of life, when we sing to you!
Now the little night-burdie may cheip i' the wa',
The plover may whew, and the cock may craw;
For the bairny's sleep is sweet and sure,
And the maiden's rest is blest and pure,
Through all the links of the Lammer Muir.
Sin our bonnie baby was sent frae heaven,
She comes o'ernight wi' the dew of even;
And when the day-sky bursts frae the main,
She swaws wi' the dew to heaven again:
But the light shall dawn, and the howlet flee,
The dead shall quake, when the day shall be,
That she shall smile in the gladsome noon,
And sleep, and sleep, in the light of the moon.
Then shall our hallelues wake anew
With harp, and viol, and ayril true.

"I've been where man should not have been,
Oft in my lonely roaming;
And seen what man should not have seen,
By greenwood in the gloaming.

"Oh, passion's deadlier than the grave,
A' human things undoing!
The Maiden of the Mountain Wave
Has lured me to my ruin!"

'Tis now an hundred years an' more,
An' all these scenes are over,
Since rose his grave on yonder shore,
Beneath the wild wood cover;

An' late I saw the Maiden there,
Just as the day-light faded,
Braiding her locks of gowden hair,
An' singing as she braided:

Mermaid's Song.

Lie still, my love, lie still and sleep,
Long is thy night of sorrow;
Thy Maiden of the Mountain deep
Shall meet thee on the morrow.

But oh, when shall that morrow be,
That my true love shall waken?
When shall we meet, refined an' free,
Amid the moorland braken?

Full low and lonely is thy bed,
The worm even flies thy pillow;
Where now the lips, so comely red,
That kissed me 'neath the willow!

Oh I must laugh, do as I can,
Even 'mid my song of mourning,
At all the fuming freaks of man
To which there's no returning.

Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep—
Hope lingers o'er thy slumber;
What though thy years beneath the steep
Should all its stones outnumber?

Though moons steal o'er an' seasons fly
On time's swift wing unstaying,
Yet there's a spirit in the sky
That lives o'er thy decaying.

In domes beneath the water-springs
No end hath my sojourning;
An' to this land of fading things
Far hence be my returning;

For spirits now have left the deep,
Their long last farewell taken:
Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep,
Thy day is near the breaking!

When my loved flood from fading day
No more its gleam shall borrow,
Nor heath-fowl from the moorland gray
Bid the blue dawn good-morrow;
The Mermaid o'er thy grave shall weep,
Without one breath of scorning:
Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep,
And fare thee well till morning!

Cary O'Kean.

The streams of Kilalla were never so sheen,
Her mountains so fair, nor her valleys so green;
The birds of the woodland are blithe as before—
Why hear we the song of the maidens no more?

There's something awanting that's nearer the heart,—
Oh, Nature is strong when unshackled by art!
The prospects of beauty on others rely,
Heart links unto heart, and eye kindles to eye;
And many a dawning shall blush o'er the scene,
Ere the maids of Kilalla be cheerful again.

'Tis true that the streams of her mountains are sheen,
Her woodlands are fair and her meadows are green,
The sunbeam of morning is bright as of yore,
And the shades of the mountain as dark as before;
As mild is the evening, as pure is the dew,
Her breeze is as sweet, and her heaven is as blue;
But, ah! there is one who is missed in the ring,
Then how can the maidens be blithsome or sing?
The youth is away, for whose pleasure they sung,
The pride of the old, and the joy of the young;
Who made the fair bosom beat briskly and high,
Gave the tint to the cheek, and the dew to the eye:
He is gone! he is gone over channel and main,
And the tears run in torrents for Cary O'Kean.

Young Cary had loved, for his heart it was kind,
He loved with a flame that was pure and refined;
Of honours or pelf he despised the name,
He loved from his heart, and expected the same:
But just as the day of the bridal came on,
The bride looked disdainful and bade him begone;
She wedded a squire who was sordid and vain,
But ten times as rich as young Cary O'Kean.

Serene is the woe, and the sorrow sublime,
When a friend is removed from the precincts of time;
For hope, from the fetters of cumbersome clay,
On the wing of eternity journeys away,
And views the abodes of the happy and blest,
Where lovers and friends from their sorrows shall rest:
The gloom of the spirit soon grasps the alloy,
And sorrow expands to a twilight of joy.

But, ah! there is something beyond all redress,
Which nature may feel, but can never express;
Too wide for the fancy, too high for the tongue,
When passion is ardent and reason is young;
A banquet of bliss, or a feeling of grief,
When bound there is none, and when death is relief.

The bourne of the spirit by misery beset,
I know it too well, and shall never forget
The days of enchantment, the joys that had birth,
Ere she whom I loved above all on this earth,
Deceived me—ah! woe that these hopes e'er had been!
O God, thou hast willed it!—I loved, and have seen
Another possessing her heart and her charms,
And the child of a fool in her delicate arms!
Down, down with reflection, it maddens my brain—
Oh, well may I feel for poor Cary O'Kean;
It seemed as if nature combined to destroy
A heart that was formed for its tenderest joy.

Away, and away he has sailed o'er the deep,
But oft turned his face to green Erin to weep:
"Adieu, once loved country, thy name be forgot,
For interest pervades thee, and feeling is not.
I'll circle the earth some sweet island to find,
Where primitive innocence models the mind;
Where nature blooms fair on the face of the free,
Where kindness conferred shall redouble to me.
There, there will I sojourn till memory is o'er,
And think of false Ella and Erin no more."

Away they have sailed over channel and main,
Till vanished behind them the stars of the Wain:
Unknown was the sky and the track of the wind,
For the sun he was north, and Orion behind;—
Over ocean's wide waste, by lone island and shore,
Which the eye of proud science ne'er measured before;—
Over waves never ploughed, wave their streamers unfurled,
For hope was their leader, their limits the world.

The bounds of humanity saw them withdraw,
And all but the triple-walled stone house they saw,
Where the world's own axletree thunders and rolls,
In grooves of blue icicle hung from the poles:
Unknown are its workings—unseen is the dome,
Unless by the whale from its window of foam.

But in all the wide world they found nothing so sweet
As the groves and the streamlets of famed Otaheite;
That paradise island, where joys never cease,
That lies like a gem midst an ocean of peace;
Where the verdure and flowers never fade on the lea,
And the fruit and the blossom are aye on the tree;
Where beauty blooms wild, which no land can outvie,
And guileless simplicity laughs in the eye.

No sooner had Cary beheld the retreat,
And the beauty misguided that blossomed so sweet;
The forms so enchanting, the manners so kind,
The bloom of ripe maidhood, with infancy's mind;
The mountains o'er mountains that towered to the sky,
And the sweet sheltered vales in their bosoms that lie,
Than a life in that island he fondly devised—
The dreams of his fancy were all realized;
For he deemed, that with freedom and honour allied,
As freely he came, he was free to abide.

He ranged through the woodlands, he heard the birds sing,
He ate of the fruit, and he drank of the spring;
The maids he saluted with courtesy kind,
For love was the passion that tempered his mind.
His choice was select, when his chance was to see
That pearl of the ocean, the young Oraee;
He loved her at first for her beauty and youth,
But her artless esteem and unblemished truth
So gained on his heart, and his feelings so moved,
Man never so felt, and man never so loved.
When on board she was borne all the wonders to view,
She looked but at Cary, to Cary she grew;
Her dark liquid eye, like the dew on the sloe,
Still followed her lover above and below;
And yet where his smile of sweet sympathy told,
That eye still abroad on the far ocean rolled;
Unconscious of ought that could evil imply,
She blushed and she faltered, yet never knew why.
No morning so early the land could he reach,
But there she was waiting with smiles on the beach;
Her slender arms spread, while the words she addressed
Well noted the welcome that glowed in her breast.
And when in the bower of the mountain he slept,
Still o'er him, unwearied, a guardship she kept;
Her arm was his pillow, and over him flew
Her dark tresses warding the sun and the dew:
Then oft when awakening he caught the sweet smile,
And the kiss lightly pressed on his temple the while;
And well of her bosom he felt the fond strife,
Like a pressure of down that had motion and life;
And then she would tell him, as o'er him she hung,
The words that the little birds said when they sung.

How poor the expression his love to convey,
To say that he loved her as life or as day!
All nature to him had but one only gem,
A treasure unvalued—one sole diadem.
Too high were his raptures for mortal to bear,
If they had not been mellowed by feeling of fear,
For his all was subjected to Nature's behest,
And too good and too dear to be ever possessed.

He heard of their leaving those isles of the main—
He heard of their sailing to Britain again
Without all emotion, save gladness of heart,
For fixed was his mind that they never should part.
But what was his pain when his captain he told,
A smile of contempt in his eye to behold!
He turned from him scornful, and laughing amain,
"Such things may not be—you must think once again."

Forthwith he foresaw that a terrible blow
Awaited his peace, which he could not forego;
A blow with more exquisite torments combined,
Than the change of his being from matter to mind:
So he fled with his love to a lonely retreat—
A cave in the mountains of green Otaheite.

Where deep they lay moored from the beams of the sun,
Their only resource what they dreaded to shun.

There, oft as they felt the sweet breath of the day,
The trembling deserter to heaven would pray,
While poor Oraee, sadly sighing, withdrew,
And sung a wild hymn to the great Eatoo.
They started at step of the prowling racoon,
And gathered their fruits by the light of the moon.

The search is extended to cavern, and tree,—
The prince is a captive, and found they must be.
Full hard was their fate, for beset was each way,
And poor Oraee was ill able to stray,
For, ah! an unmentioned season drew near;
A time of alarm, and anxiety drear!
Yet nightly she travelled, and plaining forbore,
From island to island, from mountain to shore,
Till in a lone forest, of mother forlorn,
Was the beautiful babe of the fugitives born.

Round came their pursuers, intent on their prey,
As helpless at eve in the woodland they lay;
There were they surrounded—there Cary was ta'en,
As tending his darling, and soothing her pain.
All pale was she seated beneath the wild tree,
With a fair son of Erin asleep on her knee;
With loud shout of triumph they rushed on their prey,
They seized on O'Kean, and they bore him away,
Regardless of delicate mother and child,
Her faint cries of sorrow, and ravings so wild.
They scarce looked around, though she sunk on the sward,
For great was the capture, and high the reward.
Oh, sad was that parting, and woeful the scene,
And frantic the anguish of Cary O'Kean!

On board he is carried, and pinioned fast—
The orders for sailing are issued at last;
And the crew with a sigh, the last evening greet
That e'er they should see on the loved Otaheite.

That night passed away with loud bustle and wail,
And song of the sailor as heaving the sail;
The sound on the ears of the islanders fell
Like the aerial night-concert that shepherds know well,
When phalanx of swans, at December's behest,
Are journeying to winter on shores of the west;
With hoopings untuneful they wing the dark sky,
And the peasant turns pale at the storm that is nigh.

When dawning arose from the breast of the main,
With earnestness pleaded the wretched O'Kean,
That, bound to the mast, he might stand on the hoy,
One last, longing sight of the land to enjoy.

Scarce there was he placed when he saw from the bay
A sightly canoe coming sailing away,
And placed on the prow a loved figure he knew,
Arrayed in the mantle of scarlet and blue,
Which erst had her form of virginity drest,
When first with her hand and her love he was blest.

Alert were the rowers and light the canoe;
She came like a meteor till under the prow,
When oh! the young mother looked pale and aghast,
When she saw her poor Cary bound up to the mast.
She flew to his bosom, and clasped him in pain,
But his pinioned arms could not clasp her again.

Oh, never was pleading so warm from the heart!
They pleaded together—they pleaded apart:
With the child in her bosom poor Oraee kneeled,
Imploring the captain, whose bosom was steeled.
"Oh, grant me my husband! oh, leave him with me,
Or let me go with him across the wide sea!
But sever not two hearts so faithful and true,
Else dread the high vengeance of great Eatoo!
Your love and your home you shall never see more,
But your blood shall flow red on the tine of the shore."

Though then the tear rushed to the captain's proud eye,
Stern duty forbade, and he would not comply.
The moment is come that concluded her stay,
And the mother and infant are ordered away:
She clung to her husband, refusing to go,
And force must compel her to seek the canoe.
She begged for one moment a farewell to take,
For the love of their God and humanity's sake:
'Tis granted;—in tranquil and temperate mood
She went to her lover, who motionless stood;
Her face was serene with a paleness thereon,
Like the face of the sky, when the storm is o'erblown.
She kissed—she embraced him—and fondly took leave—
Held up her young son the last kiss to receive,
Then, swift as an arrow, she sprung in the main,
Dived under the keel, and arose not again!

With shrieks of distraction the air was appalled,
For madness the brain of the husband enthralled;
He struggled in fury from bonds to get free,
But strong were the cords, and enfeebled was he.
"O God!" cried the captain, with tears in his eyes,
"Oh, save her, though all I possess be the prize!"
Sheer into the deep plunged the throng of the crew,
But all was confusion, and nothing they knew;
They sought the deep channel, impatient for breath.
But diver met diver, and grappled beneath;
On board they returned with wonder and woe,
For the body appeared not above nor below.

With a quivering lip, and an eye of red fire,
Convulsion of spirit, and utterance dire,
The injured O'Kean, to extremity driven,
In the name of the Son and the Virgin of Heaven,
Pronounced on his captain a woe that befell,
And a prayer which mercy forbids me to tell.
Oh, woe to the deed to those words that gave birth,
For the curse of the injured falls not to the earth!

They spread out the white sails so broad and so high,
That they gathered the gales from the sea to the sky,
Their bosoms all turned to the eastward away,
Down bowing sublime to the God of the Day.
The harsh creaking sounds of the rigging are loud;
The sailors' own music is shrill on the shroud;
Slow heaves the wet breast of the ship as in pain—
She growls, and departs to her pathless domain.

She rolled, she moved onward, then heeling forth ran;
And just in the wake, as the boiling began.
A sight was beheld that may scarcely be sung,
That chilled the gay spirit, and silenced the tongue:—
A slender pale corse was hove up on the tide,
One arm locked a beautiful babe to its side,
But the other was stretched on the breast of the ocean,
Spread forth like the hand of a maid in devotion;
And, long as they looked at her watery grave,
That spread hand was seen on the breast of the wave.

The ship sought the limits of ocean again,
But reason returned not to Cary O'Kean;
A being he was that had motion and breath,
But affected by nothing of life or of death.
By day he was silent, by night he reclined
On the deck, and conversed with the waves and the wind,
Till, far in a desert on Asia's coast,
This man of misfortune and sorrow was lost;
They left him unwept through the desert to hie,
Among a wild people to sojourn and die.
Oh, long of the miseries that sufferer befell
The dames of Kilalla to lovers shall tell;
And grieve for their country, the ward of the sea,
Where all but its gallant defenders are free.

But there is a feeling ingrafted on mind,
A shoot of eternity never defined,
That upward still climbs to its origin high;
Its roots are in nature, it blooms in the sky.
From that may the spirit immortal enthroned,
The pangs of this life and its sorrows beyond,
Look onward afar and exult in the view;
And the still voice that whispers, "Immortal art thou:"
On that be thy anchor when sorrows assail,
Else vain are thy sufferings, and vain is my tale.

Bothwell Brigg.

"Oh what is become o' your leal goodman,
That now you are a' your lane?
If he has join'd wi' the rebel gang,
You will never see him again."

"Oh say nae 'the rebel gang,' ladye:
It's a term nae heart can thole,
For them wha rebel against their God,
It is justice to control.

"When rank oppression rends the heart,
And rules wi' stroke o' death,
Wha wadna spend their dear heart's blood
For the tenets o' their faith?

"Then say nae 'the rebel gang,' ladye,
For it gies me muckle pain;
My John went away with Earlston,
And I'll never see either again."

"Oh wae is my heart for thee, Janet,
Oh sair is my heart for thee!
These Covenant men were ill advised;
They are fools, you may credit me.

"Where's a' their boastfu' preaching now,
Against their king and law,
When mony a head in death lies low,
And mony mae maun fa'?"

"Ay, but death lasts no for aye, ladye,
For the grave maun yield its prey;
And when we meet on the verge of heaven,
We'll see wha are fools that day:

"We'll see wha looks in their Saviour's face
With holiest joy and pride,
Whether they who shed his servants' blood,
Or those that for him died.

"I wadna be the highest dame
That ever this country knew,
And take my chance to share the doom
Of that persecuting crew.

"Then ca' us na 'rebel gang,' ladye,
Nor take us fools to be,
For there isna ane of a' that gang,
Wad change his state wi' thee."

"Oh weel may you be, my poor Janet,
May blessings on you combine!
The better you are in either state,
The less shall I repine:

"But wi' your fightings and your faith,
Your ravings and your rage,
There you have lost a leal helpmate,
In the blossom of his age.

"And what's to come o' ye, my poor Janet,
Wi' these twa babies sweet?
Ye hae naebody now to work for them,
Or bring you a meal o' meat;

"It is that which makes my heart sae wae,
And gars me, while scarce aware,
Whiles say the things I wadna say,
Of them that can err nae mair."

Poor Janet kiss'd her youngest babe,
And the tears fell on his cheek,
And they fell upon his swaddling bands,
For her heart was like to break.

"Oh, little do I ken, my dear, dear babes,
What misery's to be mine!
But for the cause we hae espoused,
I will yield my life and thine.

"Oh had I a friend, as I hae nane—
For nane dare own me now—
That I might send to Bothwell Brigg,
If the killers wad but allow,

"To lift the corpse of my brave John;
I ken where they will him find;
He wad meet his God's foes face to face,
And he'll hae nae wound behind."

"But I went to Bothwell Brigg, Janet—
There was nane durst hinder me—
For I wantit to hear a' I could hear,
And to see what I could see;

"And there I found your brave husband,
As viewing the dead my lane;
He was lying in the very foremost rank,
In the midst of a heap o' slain."

Then Janet held up her hands to heaven,
And she grat, and she tore her hair,
"O sweet ladye, O dear ladye,
Dinna tell me ony mair!

"There is a hope will linger within,
When earthly hope is vain;
But, when ane kens the very worst,
It turns the heart to stane!"

"'Oh wae is my heart, John Carr,' said I,
'That I this sight should see!'
But when I said these waefu' words,
He liftit his een to me.

"'Oh art thou there, my kind ladye,
The best o' this warld's breed,
And are you ganging your leefu' lane,
Amang the hapless dead?'

"'I hae servants within my ca', John Carr,
And a chariot in the dell,
And if there is ony hope o' life,
I will carry you hame mysell.'

"'O lady, there is nae hope o' life;
And what were life to me?
Wad ye save me frae the death of a man,
To hang on a gallows tree?

"'I hae nae hame to fly to now,
Nae country and nae kin;
There is not a door in fair Scotland
Durst open to let me in.

"'But I hae a loving wife at hame,
And twa babies, dear to me;
They hae naebody now that dares favour them,
And of hunger they a' maun dee.

"'Oh, for the sake of thy Saviour dear,
Whose mercy thou hopest to share,
Dear lady, take the sackless things
A wee beneath thy care!

"'A lang farewell, my kind ladye!
O'er weel I ken thy worth:
Gae send me a drink o' the water o' Clyde,
For my last drink on earth.'"

"Oh dinna tell me ony mair, ladye,
For my heart is cauld as clay;
There is a spear that pierces here,
Frae every word ye sae."

"He wasna fear'd to dee, Janet,
For he gloried in his death,
And wish'd to be laid with those who had bled
For the same endearing faith.

"There were three wounds in his buirdly breast,
And his limb was broke in twain,
And the sweat ran down wi' his red heart's blood,
Wrung out by the deadly pain.

"I row'd my apron round his head,
For fear my men should tell,
And I hid him in my lord's castle,
And I nursed him there mysell.

"And the best leeches in a' the land
Have tended him as he lay,
And he never has lacked my helping hand,
By night nor yet by day.

"I durstna tell you before, Janet,
For I fear'd his life was gane,
But now he's sae weel, ye may visit him,
And ye'se meet by yoursells alane."

Then Janet she fell at her lady's feet,
And she claspit them fervently,
And she steepit them a' wi' the tears o' joy,
Till the good lady wept to see.

"Oh ye are an angel sent frae heaven,
To lighten calamity!
For, in distress, a friend or foe
Is a' the same to thee.

"If good deeds count in heaven, ladye,
Eternal bliss to share,
Ye hae done a deed will save your soul,
Though ye should never do mair."

"Get up, get up, my kind Janet,
But never trow tongue or pen,
That a' the world are lost to good,
Except the Covenant men."

Wha wadna hae shared that lady's joy
When watching the wounded hind,
Rather than those of the feast and the dance,
Which her kind heart resign'd?

Wha wadna rather share that lady's fate,
When the stars shall melt away,
Than that of the sternest anchorite,
That can naething but graen and pray?

The Three Men of Moriston.

Though this ballad commemorates three worthies only, it has been said that there were six of them, namely, the three trusty Macdonalds, Peter Grant, Hugh Chisholm, and Colin Fraser, by whom the Prince was concealed and supported in a cave in Glen-Moriston, for above five weeks. One of the Macdonalds went often in disguise into the English camp, to procure some wheaten bread for their guest, and pick up what intelligence he could. There he regularly heard, at the drum-head, a proclamation in English and Gaelic, of a reward of fifty thousand pounds to any one who would produce the Pretender. But though the guardians of the cave had not a shilling among them all, they despised enriching themselves by an act of treachery. How painful it is to add, what the editor has been assured is true, that one of these magnanimous poor fellows was afterwards hanged for stealing a cow! On the ladder he declared that he had never taken either sheep or cow from any of his own clan or their friends, nor from any man who had not risen against the house of Stuart. Consequently, all attempts to persuade him to acknowledge the justice of his sentence were fruitless.

Now cease of auld ferlies to tell us,
That happen'd nane living kens when;
I'll sing you of three noble fellows
Wha lived in the wild Highlan' glen.
The times were grown hard to brave Donald,
For lost was Culloden's sad day;
The hearts o' the chiefs were a' broken,
And oh, but poor Donald was wae!

They keekit out o'er the wild correi,—
The towers of Clan-Ranald were gone;
The reek it hung red o'er Glengarry;
Lochaber was herried and lone!
They turn'd them about on the mountain,
The last o' their shealings to see;
"O, hon a Righ!" cried poor Donald,
"There's naething but sorrow for me!"

Now our three noble lads are in hiding,
Afar in Glen-Moriston's height;
In the rock a' the day they are biding,
And the moon is their candle by night.
And oft their rash rising they rued it,
As looking o'er ravage and death;
And blamed their ain prince, Charlie Stuart,
For causing the Highlands sic skaith.

At night they sat fearfu' o' danger,
And snappit their kebbuck fu' keen,
When in came a stately young stranger,
As ragged as man e'er was seen.
They hadna weel lookit around them
Till tears cam happing like rain—
"You're welcome, young Dugald M'Cluny;
For a' you see here is your ain!"

Each kend the brave wreck of Culloden,
But dared not to mention his name,
Lest one of the three had betray'd him,
And cover'd their country wi' shame.
They served him with eager devotion,
They clad him from shoulder to tae,
Spread his board from the moor and the ocean,
And watch'd o'er him a' the lang day.

They had not a plack in their coffer,
They had not a ewe on the brae,
Yet kend o' mair gowd in their offer
Than they could have carried away.
Now crack o' your Grecian and Roman!
We've cast them a' back in the shade:
Gie me a leal-hearted M'Donald,
Wi' nought but his dirk and his plaid!

The sun shines sweet on the heather,
When tempests are over and gane;
But honour shines bright in all weather,
Through poverty, hardship, and pain.
Though we had ne'er heard o' Clan-Ronald's
Nor gallant Glengarry's wild sway,
The names of the loyal M'Donalds
Had flourish'd for ever and aye!

The Liddel Bower;

A BALLAD.

"Oh, will ye walk the wood, lady?
Or will ye walk the lea?
Or will ye gae to the Liddel Bower,
An' rest a while wi' me?"

"The deer lies in the wood, Douglas,
The wind blaws on the lea;
An' when I gae to Liddel Bower
It shall not be wi' thee."

"The stag bells on my hills, lady,
The hart but and the hind;
My flocks lie in the Border dale,
My steeds outstrip the wind;

"At ae blast o' my bugle horn,
A thousand tend the ca':—
Oh, gae wi' me to Liddel Bower—
What ill can thee befa'?

"D'ye mind when in that lonely bower
We met at even tide,
I kissed your young an' rosy lips,
An' wooed you for my bride?

"I saw the blush break on your cheek,
The tear stand in your e'e;
Oh, could I ween, fair Lady Jane,
That then ye lo'ed na me?"

"But sair, sair hae I rued that day,
An' sairer yet may rue;

Ye thought na on my maiden love,
Nor yet my rosy hue.

"Ye thought na on my bridal bed,
Nor vow nor tear o' mine;
Ye thought upon the lands o' Nith,
An' how they might be thine.

"Away! away! ye fause leman,
Nae mair my bosom wring:
There is a bird within yon bower,
Oh, gin ye heard it sing!"

Red grew the Douglas' dusky cheek,
He turned his eye away,
The gowden hilt fell to his hand;
"What can the wee bird say?"

It hirpled on the bough an' sang,
"Oh, wae's me, dame, for thee,
An' wae's me for the comely knight
That sleeps aneath the tree!

"His cheek lies on the cauld, cauld clay,
Nae belt nor brand has he;
His blood is on a kinsman's spear;
Oh, wae's me, dame, for thee!"

"My yeomen line the wood, lady,
My steed stands at the tree;
An' ye maun dree a dulefu' weird,
Or mount and fly wi' me."

What gars Caerlaverock yeomen ride
Sae fast in belt an' steel?
What gars the Jardine mount his steed,
An' scour owre muir and dale?

Why seek they up by Liddel ford,
An' down by Tarras linn?
The heiress o' the lands o' Nith
Is lost to a' her kin.

Oh, lang, lang may her mother greet,
Down by the salt sea faem;
An' lang, lang may the Maxwells look,
Afore their bride come hame.

An' lang may every Douglas rue,
An' ban the deed for aye:—
The deed was done at Liddel Bower
About the break of day.

The Carle of Invertime.

Who has not heard of a Carle uncouth,
The terror of age and the scorn of youth,
Well known in this and every clime
As the grim Gudeman of Invertime?—
A stern old porter who carries the key
That opens the gate to a strange country!

The Carle's old heart with joy is dancing,
When, down the valley he sees advancing
The lovely, the brave, the good, or the great,
To pay the sad toll of his darksome gate.
'Tis said nought gives such joy to him
As the freezing blood and the stiffening limb;
It has never been mine his house to scan,
So I scarce trow this of our grim Gudeman.

Wise men believe, yet I scarce know why,
That he grimly smiles as he shoves them by;
And cares not whither to isles of bliss
They go or to sorrow's dark wilderness;
Or if, driven afar, their fate should be
To toss on the waves of a shoreless sea;
Or sunk in lakes of surging flame,
Burning and boiling, and ever the same,
Where groups of mortals toss amain
On the sultry billow and down again.
Time, from the sky shall blot out the sun,
Yet ne'er will this den of dool have done.
It makes me shake and it makes me shiver;
His presence forbid it should last for ever!

Sad, wise, or witty—all find to their cost,
That the grim old Carle is still at his post:
He sits and he sees with joy elate,
In myriads men pour in at his gate.
Some come in gladness and joy to close
Account with Time, and sink to repose;
Some come in sorrow; they think, in sooth,
It hard to be summon'd in strength and youth.
There lady and losel, peasant and lord,
Men of the pen, the sermon, the sword,
The counsellor, leech, and the monarch sublime,
All come to the Carle of Invertime.

Amongst the others, one morning came
An aged and a venerable dame,
Stooping, and palsied, and pain'd to boot,
Moaning and shaking from head to foot.
Slow in her pace, yet steady of mind,
She turn'd not once, nor look'd behind;
Nor dreading nor daring her future fate,
She tottered along to the dismal gate.

A gleam of light danced in the eye
Of the grim Gudeman as the dame drew nigh;
Little cared he for an old gray wife,
Who hung like a link 'tween death and life;
But, by the side of the eldern dame,
A form so pure and so lovely came,
That the Carle's cold veinless heart heaved high.
A tear like an ice-drop came to his eye;
He vowed through his gate she should not win:
She seem'd no child of sorrow and sin.
As thus he stood in his porch to mark,
His looks now light and his looks now dark,
He marvell'd to hear so lovely a thing
Lift up her voice and gently sing
A strain, too holy, too sweet, and wild,
And charming to come from an earth-born child;
It glow'd with love, and fervour, and faith,
And seem'd to triumph o'er time and death:

"Great Fountain of Light,
And Spirit of Might,
To work thy will has been my delight;
And here at my knee,
From guiltiness free,
I bring a mild meek spirit to thee.

"When first I went to guide her to truth,
She was in the opening blossom of youth;
When scarce on her leaf, so spotless and new,
Ripe reason had come with her dropping dew.
Where life's pure river is but a rill,
She grew, and scarce knew good from ill;
But my sisters three
Came soon to me,
Pure Love, true Faith, sweet Charity.
Through doubts and fears,
These eighty years,
We have showed her the way to the heavenly spheres.
Our first stage down life's infant stream
Was all a maze and a childish dream;
And nought was there of sin or sense,
But dawning beauty and innocence;
A fairy dance of sweet delight,
Through flowers, and bowers, and visions bright.
Sometimes a hymn, and sometimes a prayer,
Was poured to thee with a fervent air;
'Twas sung or said, and straight was seen
The sweet child gamboling on the green;
While the pure hymn, late pour'd to thee,
Was chanted light as a song of glee.

"As we went down the vale of life,
With flowers the road became less rife.
By pitfall, precipice, and pool,
Our way was shaped, by line and rule.
'Mid hours of joy and days of mirth,
And hopes and fears, high thoughts had birth,
And natural yearnings of the mind,
Of something onward, undefined—
Which scarce the trembling soul durst scan—
Of God's most wondrous love to man,
And some far forward state of bliss,
Of beauty, and of holiness;
But to all woes and evils blinded,
Or thoughts of death, unless reminded.
Oh! happy age, remember'd well,
Where neither sin nor shame can dwell!
Even then thine eye,
From heaven high,
Saw that her monitor was nigh;
At morn and even,
To turn to heaven
The grateful eye for blessings given.
And from the first prevailing tide
Of sin, and vanity, and pride,
To save her, and to lead her on
To glories unreveal'd, unknown.

"Onward we came; life's streamlet then
Enter'd a green and odorous glen;
Increased, and through fair flowrets rolling,
And shady bowers, seem'd past controlling;
Flowing 'mid roses, fast and free—
This was a trying stage for me!
The maiden's youthful heart began
To dance through scenes Elysian;
To breathe in love's ambrosial dew,
Moved by sensations sweet and new;
For, without look or word of blame,
Her radiant blushes went and came;
Her eye, of heaven's own azure blue,
In glance and lustre brighter grew;
Showing fond feelings all akin
To that pure soul which lived within.

"With heart so soft and soul sincere,
Love found his way by eye and ear.
Then how I labour'd, day and night,
To watch her ways and guide her right!
I brought cool airs from paradise
To purify her melting sighs;
I steep'd my vail in heaven's own spring,
And o'er her watch'd on silent wing;
And, when she laid her down to rest,
I spread the vail o'er her virgin breast:
All earthly passions far did flee,
And heart and soul she turn'd to thee.

"Throughout her life
Of wedded wife,
I wean'd her soul from passion's strife;
But oh! what fears,
And frequent tears
For the peril of childhood's tender years!
And when her firstborn's feeble moan
Was hushed by the soul's departing groan;
In that hour of maternal grief,
I pointed her way to the sole relief.
Another sweet babe there came and went—
Her gushing eyes she fix'd, and bent
Upon that mansion bright and sweet,
Where sever'd and kindred spirits meet.

"She has wept for the living, and wept for the dead,
Laid low in the grave her husband's head;
She has toil'd for bread with the hands of age,
And, through her useful pilgrimage,
Has seen her race sink, one by one—
All, all she loved—yet, left and lone,
With cheer unchanged, with heart unshook,
On God she fix'd her steadfast look.
And now with the eye of purest faith,
She sees, beyond the vale of death,
A day that has no cloud or shower—
She has less dread of her parting hour,
Than ever had babe of its mother's breast,
When it lays its innocent head to rest.

"O Maker of Earth, dread Ruler above,
Receive her spirit, her faith approve!

But, well-a-day!
How shall we say
Our earthly adieu ere we pass away!
Ring! Ring!
Dance and sing,
And on the green broom your garlands hing;
Hallow the hopes of this ray of grace,
For sweet is the smile of our baby's face;
And every ghaist of geysand hue
Has melted away in the air she drew.
The kelpy may dern, in drear and dool,
Deep in the howe of his eiry pool;
Gil-Moules frae hint the hallan may flee
Through by the threshold and through by the key,
And the mermaid moote in the saffron sea:
But we are left in the greenwood glen,
Because we love the children of men,
Sweetly to sing, and never to rue,
Till now that we hymn our last adieu;
Baby of life, we sing it to you!

Sing, sing!
How shall we sing
Round the babe of the spirits' king!
Hither the breezes of Elfland bring,
Then, fairies, away—away on the wing!
We now maun flit to a land of bliss—
To a land of holy silentness;
To a land where the night-wind never blew,
But thy fair spring shall ever be new.
When the moon shall wake, nae mair to wane,
And the cloud and the rainbow baith are gane,
In bowers aboon the break o' the day,
We'll sing to our baby for ever and aye.

Then the earle beheld them swoof alang,
And heard the words of their farewell sang;
They seem'd to ling asklent the wind,
And left a pathway of light behind;
But he heard them singing as they flew—
"Baby of life, adieu! adieu!
Baby of grace, we sing to you!"

Then the earle he kneel'd to that seraph young,
And named her with a tremulous tongue;
And the light of God shone on his face,
As he look'd to heaven and named her GRACE;
And he barr'd the day of sorrow and pain
Ever to thrall the world again;
Then he clasp'd his hands, and wept full sore,
When he bade her adieu for evermore.

Oh! never was baby's smile so meek
When she felt the tear drop on her cheek;
And never was baby's look so wae
When she saw the stern auld earle gae;
But a' his e'eless and elfin train,
And a' his ghaists and gyes are gane:
The gleids that gleam'd in the darksome shaw,
And his fairies had flown the last of a'.
Then the poor auld earle was blythe to flee
Away frae the queen isle of the sea,
And never mair seeks the walks of men.
Unless in the disk of the gloaming glen.

Lines to Sir Walter Scott, Bart.

Sound, my old harp, thy boldest key
To strain of high festivity!
Can'st thou be silent in the brake,
Loitering by Altrive's mountain lake,
When he who gave the hand its sway
That now has tuned thee many a day,
Has gained thee honours trulier won,
Than e'er by sword of Albyn's son;
High guerdon of a soul refined,
The meed of an exalted mind!

Well suits such wreath thy loyal head,
My counsellor, and friend indeed.
Though hard through life I've pressed my way
For many a chill and joyless day,
Since I have lived enrapt to hail
My sovereign's worth, my friend's avail,
And see, what more I prize than gain,
Our forest harp the bays obtain,
I'll ween I have not lived in vain.

Ah! could I dream when first we met,
When by the scanty ingle set,
Beyond the moors where curlews wheel
In Ettrick's bleakest, loneliest sheil,
Conning old songs of other times,
Most uncouth chants and crabbed rhymes—
Could I e'er dream that wayward wight,
Of roguish joke, and heart so light,
In whose oft-changing eye I gazed,
Not without dread the head was crazed,
Should e'er, by genius' force alone,
Skim o'er an ocean sailed by none;
All the hid shoals of envy miss,
And gain such noble port as this?

I could not: but I cherish still
Mirth at the scene, and ever will,
When o'er the fells we took our way;
('Tis twenty years, even to a day,
Since we two sought the fabled urn
Of marble blue by Rankleburn):
No tomb appeared; but oft we traced
Towns, camps, and battle-lines effaced,
Which never were, nor could remain,
Save in the bold enthusiast's brain:
The same to us—it turned our lays
To chiefs and tales of ancient days.
One broken pot alone was found
Deep in the rubbish under ground,
In middle of the ancient fane—
"A gallant helmet split in twain!"
The truth was obvious; but in faith
On you all words were waste of breath;

You only looked demure and sly,
And sore the brow fell o'er the eye;
You could not bear that you should ride
O'er pathless waste and forest wide,
Only to say that you had been
To see that nought was to be seen.

The evenings came; more social mirth
Ne'er flowed around the cottage hearth:
When Maitland's song first met your ear,
How the furled visage up did clear,
Beaming delight! though now a shade
Of doubt would darken into dread
That some unskilled presumptuous arm
Had marred tradition's mighty charm.

Scarce grew thy lurking dread the less,
Till she, the ancient minstreless,
With fervid voice, and kindling eye,
And withered arms waving on high,
Sung forth these words in eldritch shriek,
While tears stood on thy nut-brown cheek—

"Na, we are nane o' the lads o' France,
Nor e'er pretend to be;
We be three lads of fair Scotland,
Auld Maitland's sons, a' three!"

Thy fist made all the table ring—
"By ——, sir, but that is the thing!"

Yes, twenty years have come and fled
Since we two met, and time has shed
His riming honours o'er each brow—
My state the same, how changed art thou!
But every year yet overpast
I've loved thee dearer than the last.
For all the volumes thou hast wrote,
Those that are owned, and that are not,
Let these be conned even to a grain,
I've said it, and will say't again—
Who knows thee but by these alone,
The better half is still unknown.

I know thee well—no kinder breast
Beats for the woes of the distrest,
Bleeds for the wounds it cannot heal,
Or yearns more o'er thy country's weal.
Thy love embraces Britain o'er,
And spreads and radiates with her shore;
Scarce fading on her ocean's foam,
But still 'tis brightest nearest home,
Till those within its central rays,
Rejoicing, bask within the blaze.

Blessed be the act of sovereign grace,
That raised thee 'bove the rhyming race:
Blessed be the heart and head elate,
The noble generous estimate
That marked thy worth, and owned the hand
Resistless in its native land.
Bootless the waste of empty words,
Thy pen is worth ten thousand swords.

Long brook thy honours, gallant knight,
So firm of soul, so stanch of right;
For had thy form but reached its prime,
Free from mischance in early time,
No stouter sturdier arm of weir
Had wielded sword or battle spear.
For war thy boardly frame was born,
For battle shout, and bugle-horn;
Thy boyish feats, thy youthful dream—
How thy muse kindles at the theme!
Chance marred the path, or Heaven's decree;
How blessed for Scotland and for me!

Scarce sounds thy name as 't did before,—
Walter the Abbot now no more:
Well,—let it be,—I'll not repine,
But love the title since 'tis thine.
Long brook thy honours, firm to stand
As Eildon rock; and that thy land,
The first e'er won by dint of rhyme,
May bear thy name till latest time,
And stretch from bourn of Abbot's-lea
To Philhope Cross, and Eildon Tree,
Is the heart's wish of one who's still
Thy grateful shepherd of the hill!

The Descent of Love.

Ah youthful Love! thy votarist,
Though oft he turns into a jest
Thy freaks or foibles, yet will join
In humble worship at thy shrine,
And eulogize thee morn and even,
As the best, earliest gift of Heaven.

Thou blushing thing of pain and bliss!
Child of a happier sphere than this!
Wert thou a nursling of the sky,
Foster'd in Paradise on high,
To thrill the radiant breasts above?
No—angels feel not youthful love!
Theirs is a flame we cannot know,
A holy ardour free from woe;
But ours a joy, supreme, intense,
A short and splendid recompense
For an esteem, unbroke, unmoved,
Which man immortal might have proved.
Art thou not then, O virtuous love,
The dearest gift of Heaven above?

Blest be thy native home on earth,
The place that own'd thy mystic birth,
When far beneath the golden morn
Was thy seraphic being born.
Where Euphrates and Tigris' strands
Join 'mid the sweet Assyrian lands;
Where that great river rolling blue
Mirror'd the earliest flowers that grew,
When scarce had bud began to blow,
Or blossom deck'd the world below,

Then was the shade of tiny tree
The bed of thy nativity.

While the first pair of human frame
Lay weeping their immortal blame,
By deep remorse and sorrow toss'd,
For all their gifts and glory lost;
Even then, when grief was at the full,
And no redress their pains to lull,
Thy cherub form from heaven descended,
In all the rays of beauty blended,
And their repentant breasts above
Thou wov'st the holy ties of love;
While by a mystic art unnamed
Of thy fair self the bonds were framed,
And ne'er did heavenly art entwine
A wreath so cheering and divine.

Full soon the pair thy presence own'd;
They found their hearts to nature bound
By tie, not proved, nor understood,
A bond of kindred and of blood,
And in delight without alloy
Their hearts rejoiced in nature's joy.
The river flow'd more silvery bright,
The flowers were glowing with delight,
The young twin roses had begun
Their homage to the morning sun,
In odours breathed from bosoms meek,
And made obeisance cheek to cheek.

In a blest world they seem'd to move,
A world of pathos and of love,
Where all was deck'd in glories new;
The sunbeam kiss'd the morning dew:
The fields were robed in deeper green;
The blue of heaven was more serene;
The birds sang sweeter in the grove,
Hailing the natal morn of love;
Not even from Eden's sacred tree
Was ever pour'd such melody.

But of all ecstasies refined,
The greatest still remain'd behind.
A new delight thrill'd and subdued,
When eye met eye with love imbued;
When he with raptures scarce terrene
First turn'd his view on nature's queen,
On that dear form whose soften'd charms
Besought protection in his arms;
Whose every look, and smile, and sigh,
Bespoke a chasten'd courtesy.
He saw her eye of deeper blue,
Her cheek grown rosier in its hue,
While her fair bosom's gentle swell
With hallow'd heavings rose and fell;

Then was thy heavenly being blest
With earthly home of holy rest,
And woman's breast was form'd to be
The tabernacle meet for thee.

Wallace.[1]

Let every nation, every age,
Boast of its warrior, patriot, sage;
Take all in list below the sun,
From Samson down to Wellington;
And in one little northern land,
Amid the ocean's raving strand,
A shapeless mass of isle and firth,
The outmost limits of the earth,
I pledge my word a knight to name,
For patriot worth, for warrior fame,
For might, for honour, courage true,
For love of king, and country too,
That shall them all in one outdo.

Bold is the challenge. I have laid
My word in pawn; and if 'tis said
Or thought (as God forbid the sin)
"A poet's word's not worth a pin;"
Why then I pledge my pen beside,
In which, forsooth, I more confide.
"Who is this patriot? Where the isle?"
I hear you say, and see you smile:
Well—mockery is the poet's due
When his position proves untrue.
That land is Caledonia hight;
That hero's name is Wallace wight.

Wallace! unstained, illustrious name!
My country's honour, and her shame!
Can there a Scottish heart be found,
That glows not at the very sound
Of such a name? Is breast so base
That burns not at our hero's praise?
There was—but with thy life it past,
And thou hast found thy due at last.
Wallace! unstained, illustrious name!
My country's honour, and her shame!

Cæsar might roam in days agone
O'er lands where science never shone;
And Grecia's maniac king o'errun
The nations of the morning sun,
Whom the great Tartar, next in fame,
Far journeying, saw and overcame.
These themes of many an annalist,
These things insatiate and unblest,

[1] This poem was reluctantly and hurriedly written, in compliance with the solicitations of a friend who would not be gainsayed, to compete for a prize offered by a gentleman for the best poem on the subject. The prize was finally awarded to Mrs. Felicia Hemans; and, as far as the merits of mine went, very justly; hers being greatly superior both in elegance of thought and composition. Had I been constituted the judge myself, I would have given hers the preference by many degrees; and I estimated it the more highly as coming from one of the people that were the hero's foes, oppressors, and destroyers. I think my heart never warmed so much to an author for any poem that ever was written.

What have they done?—Did good design
With one of all their deeds combine?
With such resources, such array,
Such warriors to dispute their way,
Their fame's fantastic and untrue,
Nor praise nor honour is their due.
Cursed be the trophies, cursed the joy
Of him who conquers to destroy!

Descend to days ourselves have seen,
And deeds such as have never been
Of devastation, tyrant wrath,
Of ruin, and dismay, and death;—
Even there, what hero e'er hath stood
Amid oppression's foaming flood,
Without one stay to rest upon,
Unawed, undaunted, and alone;
And by his single arm of might
Preserved his country's primal right?
If such there be, a nation's pride,
With WALLACE be he named and tried.

No; vain the contest, vain the proof;
Stand, Swede and Corsican, aloof:
What boots the hero's enterprise
Without a nation's energies?
Endeavours else would madness seem—
So all men say, and all men deem.

But there was one,—when power had bowed,
When king and nobles were subdued,
And joined the oppressor to efface
The last faint lines of Scotia's race:
When bent before the mighty blast
Prince, chief, and warrior; and the last,
The peasant, on his native field,
Was forced indignantly to yield,
In whom alone the glorious light
Was smothered, not extinguished quite.
'Twas then that one gigantic soul
Dared the whole tide of power control;
Lifted his mighty sword—and then,
Amid the multitudes of men,
Stood like a rock whose rugged side
Repels the wind, the storm, the tide;
Proclaimed the freedom of the land,
Though lodged within his own right hand;
And vowed to Heaven that land to free,
Or die with her lost liberty!

That noble heart, that free-born mind,
Was lodged within no common hind.
His stature was the pine tree's height;
His strength beyond the bison's might;
Serene of soul, of courage high,
The light of heaven was in his eye;
While every look, and word, and nod,
Bespoke the chief upraised by God;
And deeds of a resistless brand
Gave token of supreme command:
The hardy peasant roused to ire,
Soon caught a portion of the fire.

Then burst the glorious flame to light;
The spark of heaven spread far and bright.
The shepherd left the mountain steep,
He left his folds and flocks of sheep;
The hind forsook his furrowed field,
And grasped the spear and knotted shield;
And even the haggard artizan
Looked fiercer than the eye of man
E'er looked before; and one might trace
A grimness settled on each face,
A resolution that bespoke
Hatred of tyrant's galling yoke.
Scotland, thou nurse of courage true,
Beneath the plaid and bonnet blue!
Land of the loyal patriot flame,
Where WALLACE fought, and BRUCE o'ercame;
Land of the mountain-oak and pine,
I have one honour—I am thine!

Armies decayed, as by a charm,
Before one dread resistless arm;
The mightiest towers were level laid;
The foe was humbled and dismayed:
For no defence could aught avail;
Nor fort, nor city, hill nor vale,
Could shield them from the fierce alarm,
And vengeance of that deadly arm.

Aloof the envious nobles stood,
Awed at the waste of warrior blood;
They saw the land from foes set free,
And scarcely weened how it might be;
But few there were who deigned to yield
Assistance in the glorious field.

No lands, no wealth, no rich resource,
Had WALLACE to sustain his force;
A heavy sword and dauntless heart
Were all he had—the hero's part!
Without reward his warriors fought—
None was to give, and none they sought;
Freedom the only hire they know,
And booty from a vanquished foe.

The greatest king on earth was foiled,
His realms invaded and despoiled.
Proud England with amazement saw
The chief descend whose sword was law,
With all his motley, bold array,—
The Borderer in his homely gray,
The tartaned clans of every glen,
The wildest hordes of living men,
In every shade the rainbow knew,
The green, the red, the pale, the blue,—
Men of all colours, come to kill,
To burn and ravage at their will,
Through her rich valleys far and near,
And none to check their bold career:
No force, no fraud, no strife they dread,
With doughty WALLACE at their head.
Before him, jarring kings combined,
And pride and envy raged behind;

Yet still unchanged, unawed, he fought,
Due vengeance on the English wrought,
And woe to him that dared withstand
His progress through that guilty land!
One year in midst of it he lay,
Returned triumphant with the prey,
And never met with town, or tower,
Or foe, he did not overpower.

His men enriched, his country freed,
(Mark well the hero's every deed!)
All vacant stood the Scottish throne,
'Twas claimed by six, possessed by none:
His conquering army wished to set
Upon his head the coronet;
And this, as Regent, had he chose,
There was no force that could oppose:
But with a heart that would not lure,
And soul as firm as it was pure,
All power or title he disclaimed;
And that it might no more be named,
His high command and guardian sword
Back to the states he straight restored,
Who had that power to him decreed
When in their last and utmost need.
If this is not true patriot worth,
Where hath it ripened on the earth?

Again the land's in danger great,
For wild division rends the state;
Again the staff to him they yield
To lead them to the sanguine field.
'Gainst his own prince he's doomed to fight,
All to uphold that prince's right,
While envy, hate, and Highland pride,
Success to the great cause denied.

By foes beleagnered, faint, outworn,
His mighty soul with grief was torn;
Down to the Carron's shore alone
Darkling he strayed, to vent his moan
For those had fallen in that day's strife,
And yielded but with yielding life;
Stewart and Graham—the good, the great;
Man's perfidy, and Scotland's fate.
'Twas there and then, concealed from sight
Within the curtain of the night,
That to his prince these words he said,
And his free bosom open laid.

"And dost thou ween, unhappy knight,
That I for power or honours fight?
That I would sear this head with crown,
Or hand with sceptre not mine own?
That WALLACE e'er would stoop to claim
Usurper's loathed and hateful name,
And thus disgrace the sacred cause
Of country's freedom, rights, and laws?
Cursed be the arm for this that fought,
The heart that cherished such a thought!

"No, prince;—I've fought for liberty;
I've done but what belonged to thee.
When basely thou renounced the crown,
And joined with foes against thine own;
When all the nobles, all the great,
That should have borne the battle's weight,
Had left poor Scotland to the tide
Of tyrant might, and none to guide;
'Twas then that I, by forest deep,
In pathless wild, and mountain steep,
Where friend or comforter was none,
Withstood King Edward's power alone.
Striving, nor vainly did I strive,
To keep the trembling spark alive,
I reared our standard on the tree,
And fought for liberty and thee.

"Though twice I've driven him from our coast,
By treachery is the advantage lost;
Whilst thou, injurious to thy land,
Hast torn her bowels with the hand
That should have proved her guardian shield,
And pressed the foremost on the field.

"Oh, yet be free!—and here I swear
The Scottish crown thou hence shalt wear;
My guardian power I'll yield with pride,
And fight thy battles by thy side:
Be Scotland free from England's chain,
I am content though I remain
The meanest follower in thy train."

This glorious model match who can?
There spoke the patriot and the man.
True son of Scotia!—Chief of fame,
Dear is thy memory and thy name!
A memory that claims a part
In the best feelings of the heart;
A rousing charm that points to truth;
A torch that lights the soul of youth
To valour, honour, warrior feat,
To all that's good and all that's great.
Star of my country—of the land
That never crouched to foeman's brand!

Oft have I seen the veteran old,
When telling tales of warrior bold,
If word of ONE were said or sung,
Nay, if, by chance, from maiden's tongue
WALLACE's name in whispers fell,
His form would seem to grow and swell,
His eye would shed a brighter ray,
And prouder wave his locks of gray.

To drowsy boy in winter night,
Speak but the name of WALLACE wight;
Although his weather-beaten head
Should on his ragged sleeve be laid
In dozing mood, with closed eye,
With white bluff cheek, and mouth awry;
If WALLACE' name but meet his ear
How his brown visage up will clear!
His eyelids heavy and opprest
He'll raise, and gape to hear the rest.

Oft had the sire, at midnight deep,
Been wakened from his grateful sleep
By prattling imp, that he might say
Tales o'er and o'er till break of day;
Tales that had broke the lubber's rest
Of HIM whose name he loved the best;
Of hard unequal combats won;
What heroes fought and were outdone;
And haply, ere next evening fell,
These tales were all again to tell.
Ah! many a lip of maiden coy,
And cheek of blowzy cottage boy,
Have at his deeds with ardour flamed,
And blenched when a Monteith was named.

Blessed be the dame whose kindred faith
Drove her from church in triple wrath!
She deemed the bedesman Southron's tool,
A sneaking knave, a prating fool,
For saying that "since time began
One Samson was the strongest man;
And that the Bible's sacred page
Was the best book of any age."
But on the threshold, in her wrath,
To vindicate her patriot faith,
She turned, and cried, squeaking amain,
"Read WALLACE, and say so again!"

That name, in Scotia permanent,
Is with our hearts and annals blent;
Memorial dear, without a blot,
What once she was, and now is not!
And still of all the names I see,
Even in this land of loyalty,
On roll of fame recorded wide,
Or margined on rebellion's side,
(Rebellion's side! Ah, woe's my heart,
That loyalty finds such desert!)
But yet of all these chiefs of worth,
These heroes of the plaided north,
There is not name beloved so well;
On which the soul delights to dwell
Without alloy—or still that can
Stand as the polar star of man:
And doubly blest that man shall be,
That cherisheth his memory!

Hymn to the Ebening Star.

Arise, arise, thou Queen of Love!
Thy bed is chilled with evening dew;
Thy robe the virgin fays have wove,
And reared thy canopy of blue.

Oh, let me see thy golden breast,
Thy amber hallow o'er the hill,
And all the chambers of the west,
Thy coronal with glory fill!

Oh come!—the evening colours fade,
Soft silence broods o'er lawn and lea;
And beauty in the greenwood shade
Uplifts a longing eye for thee.

Thy temple be this sylvan bower,
Where wounded lovers kneel confest;
Thine altar-cloth the daisy flower;
Thy tabernacle beauty's breast;

Be this thy dearest, holiest shrine;
Thy breviary two beaming eyes;
And aye I'll pant to see thee shine—
Beloved star, arise, arise!

Oh, let thy spirit seek the glade,
To hear thy holy vesper sung,—
But tell not where my cheek was laid,
Nor where my careless arm was flung.

As slowly steals, on angel's wing,
Thy light pavilion down the sky,
Before thee let young seraphs sing
The softest love-sick melody!

And here on thy beloved shrine,
Where fragrant flames of incense glow,
Pure as that heavenly breast of thine,
And fairer than the virgin snow;

Here will I worship with delight,
And pay the vows I made to thee,
Until thy mild and modest light
Is cradled on the heaving sea.

Will and Dabie:

A SCOTTISH PASTORAL.

Where Yarrow pours her silver billow
Through bowers of birch, and brakes of willow;
Where loud the grouse crows on the fell,
And sweet the thrush sings in the dell;
Where milk-white flocks unnumbered lie,
And mirth laughs keen in every eye;
And plenty smiles from day to day,
Beneath Buccleuch's indulgent sway;
Two friendly shepherds, blithe and young,
Oft on the greensward sat and sung,
Or scoured the lofty fells together,
And brushed the red flower from the heather.

One morn they tuned, by dawn of day,
On Bowerhope Law the rural lay;
For such a scene that lay was meet—
As wildly gay, as simply sweet;
The great may even lend an ear
Wild Yarrow's mountain strains to hear.

DAVIE.

Ah, Will, these purple heather blooms,
That round us shed their light perfumes,

These sparkling gems of crystal dew,
That morning sky so mild and blue,
Have raised my heart to such a height,
I breathe so pure, I feel so light,
'Gainst all the reasons you can bring
I must and will my matin sing.
Cheer up your heart, for once be gay;
Screw on your flute and join the lay!

WILL.

Ah, shepherd, cease; your idle strain
Adds sharpness to my bosom's pain.
How can ye pour that strain so airy,
That trifling, idle, wild vagary;
Nor, sadly, once reflect with me
On what has been, and what may be!

"As little heeds the lark on high
The watchful falcon hovering nigh,
But flickering his kind mate above,
He trills his matin song of love.
Ah, reckless bird, that lively strain
Thy mate shall never hear again!
The spoiler tears thy panting breast,
And all forsaken is thy nest."

Cease, shepherd, cease—the case is yours;
The sky of Britain threatening lowers!
Else, let your strain be soft and slow,
And every fall a note of woe.

DAVIE.

How can I strike one plaintive sound
While nature smiles so sweet around!
See how our lambs, in many a skein,
Are dancing on the daisied green;
Their pliant limbs they keenly brace,
Strained in the unambitious race;
Till gruff old wedders, blithe to see
The young things skip so merrily,
With motley antics join the throng,
And bob and caper them among.

The plover whistles in the glen,
The tewit lilts above the fen;
Even the hoarse curlew strains her throat,
And yelps her loudest, liveliest note:
The rural joy then must I shun,
So ripened by the rising sun?
No—while my bosom beats so high,
Responsive to a lovely eye
That pierced it with a gilded arrow,
I'll sing of love, of joy, and Yarrow.

I'll sing that rural scene before me;
That shady world of placid glory.
See how the afer vibrates o'er
The lofty front of brown Clokmore;
Beyond Carlevon's rocky crest
The drowsy moon sinks pale to rest;
An angel shade of silken green
O'erveils the cliffs of wild Loch Skene;
While Border Cheviot, blue and high,
Melts like a shadow on the sky.

From proud Mount Benger's top, the sun
His airy course has scarce begun;
His orient cheek is resting still
Upon the gray cairn on the hill.
The scarlet curtain of the sky,
A wreathed and waving canopy,
Sweels like the dew on mountain flower
Or frost-work in the southland shower.

The Yarrow, like a baldrick thrown
Loose on the vale, lies bent and lone;
A silver snake of every dye
That gilds the mountain, tincts the sky;
And slowly o'er her verdant vales
A cobweb veil of vapour sails.

Saint Mary holds her mirror sheen,
To moorland gray and mountain green;
To speckled schell-fowl hovering nigh,
To milky swan and morning sky:
Their phantom cliffs hang trembling low,
And hoary thorns inverted grow.

Her purple bosom sleeps as still
As sunbeam on the silent hill,
No curling breeze across it strays,
No sportful eddy o'er it plays,
Save where the wild duck wanders slow,
Or dark trout spreads his waxing O.

Look to the east—'tis shadow all,
Crowned by yon broad and dazzling ball.
Turn westward—mountain, glen, and wold,
Are all one blaze of burning gold!

Ah, God of nature! such a scene,
So grand, so lovely, so serene,
Bears the free soul on rapture's wing,
Before thy diamond throne to sing;
Above yon sky's celestial blue,
To gaze on glories ever new;
And list the strains of angel song
From angel harps that pour along,
By fragrant breezes softly driven
O'er suns that sand the floors of heaven.

The enraptured youth now ceased to sing;
But still, on ether's waving wing,
From echo's cave was borne along
The dying measures of the song:
With eye entranced, and head declined,
They listened to the waving wind—
Hung on the cliff-born fairy lay,
Till the last quaver died away.

Storm of Thunder among Mountains.

"No; such a day I find not registered
In my old worn-out memory, although there
The calendar's distinct and legible.

Full sixty years I've sojourned 'neath these rocks:
Look at them, stranger—these dim hideous cliffs,
That wrangle with the heavens. These to me
Are as my kindred; each aërial sound
That comes down from these hoary monitors
Hath language in it. The old raven's voice
Is to me as a brother's; and the eagle
From off his morning cliff tells me the tidings
Of days to come. The cataract's changing note,
Its trumpet tones, and its soft swelling melody,
Have all an utterance. Here I am as much
A thing of nature, of the wilderness,
As cloud or cliff, eagle or sounding stream—
A shred of the ever-changing elements.

"But on that dreadful day my ample book,
The great vocabulary of nature, closed,
And voices more triumphant went abroad.
Can'st thou divulge me, traveller; were the spirits
Of the vast deep let loose, trying to shake
And shiver this fair universe to pieces?
Or did the eternal God himself descend
Upon our mountains?"

"It was nature all,
Nothing but nature's self, be thou assured,
Most venerable hind; but thou hast seen her
In temporary and strong convulsion."

"No; I know all her features, all her hues,
And all her thousand voices. Yon fleet clouds,
Which I term billows of the firmament—
Look to them, traveller: how they heave, and sail
From cliff to cliff, roll down into the chasms,
Then rise from the opposing steeps like spray—
Is it not grand?—And think'st thou I not know
Each boding hue, each movement, and each shade,
Of that aërial ocean? What am I
But as a wave of it? and dost thou think,
Old as I am, that I not know myself?

"You children of the valley live and think
As such behoves, amid the reign of man;
Look on these regions of sublimity,
Changing their shades to all infinitude,
Yet still the same—This is the reign of God!

"Stare not, I am no maniac. Sit thee down,
While I describe that morning as I saw it
From this same spot.—I rose and looked around;
The hour told that the morning was advanced,
But Heaven said, No. Methought the sun had stood
Still o'er the valley of Jehoshaphat,
Or that the night of Egypt had returned.
It was a hideous twilight. No bird sung;
The flocks forgot to feed, and stood and gazed,
Nor wist they what to dread. Sometimes I heard
A tremulous bleat come from the hills, and then
It came in such a tone it frightened me.
Still darker grew the morn; the brooding cloud
Lean'd its grim bosom deeper o'er the glen;
The heavens and earth were mingled, closed around,
And here was I, an old and trembling thing,
Immured between them. For my hills I looked;
I looked to heaven, and for the blessed sun,
But all were lost—all curtained in together
In one impervious veil. I prayed to God,
And waited the event. Forthwith arose
A rushing sound somewhere above my head,
Whether in earth or heaven, in rock or cloud,
I could not tell; but nearer still it came,
And louder and more furious was the sound,
Like many torrents rushing on the wind.
Anon I saw the bosom of the cloud
Begin to heave and work with boiling motion,
And on its murky breast strange hues arose
Of dull and pallid blue, or muffled red,
While frightful openings yawned and closed again.
Nature lay on a bed of travailing;
Now strong convulsions, throes, and wrestlings,
Showed that with serpent birth her breast would rend:
Short then the pause and troubled, ere I saw
The heaven's slow swarthy bosom burst asunder,
And rain, and hail, and bolts of liquid flame
Issued at once. No sooner had the blaze
Dazzled my sight, than from the inmost cloud
The voice of the Eternal God came forth
As if in tenfold wrath; while every cave,
And every echo of these frowning cliffs
Shouted and jabbered as in mockery.
How my heart trembled! and a chillness crept
O'er all my frame; for such a rending crash,
So loud and so prolonged, ne'er stunned the ear
Of sinful worm. Fain would I have rebuked
The hills for such unholy mimicry,
For every rock, ravine, and yawning bourn,
Nay, every tiny clough, sent forth its thunder,
Jarring it proudly: Thus with every peal
Ten thousand thunders issued forth their voices.
Forgive me, stranger, but at times I deemed
The palaces of heaven were rent asunder,
And clattering down the air. The hills were smitten
For their presumption; for the lightning struck
And wounded their green bosoms; and their rocks,
Their proudest peaks were splintered and o'erthrown
By these fleet darts from the Almighty's hand,
And toppled down their sides with feeble sound,
As in confession of their nothingness
Before their Maker's anger. First the hail
Burst through its sable shroud, and strewed the land
With whitened desolation; then the doors,
The flood-gates of that dark impending tide,
Were all let loose, and on the prostrate earth
The mighty cataracts of the heaven descended;
From these proud mountains poured a thousand streams,
Where streams before ne'er ran, and every one
Pelting and foaming 'gainst all opposition
With upstart insolence, as who should say

Here am I; who dare bar my mighty course?
Then, ever and anon, the rending peal
Made the rocks chatter, rolled from hill to hill,
And boomed along the sky. Oh, such a scene
These old dim eyes shall never look upon,
Nor these ears listen, in this earthly frame!
Then tell not me of nature's operations;
That was no produce of her onward work,
But a dire judgment and a grievous one,
As all the land hath found. My Bible calls
Thunder the voice of the Eternal God.
For me, I had a thought, a sinful one,
But I must tell it:—I did dread the fiends
Had met in conclave in that hollow cloud,
That seemed in burning colic with the mass
Within its hideous womb. The gleaming bolts
I deemed the arrows of the Almighty, sent
To scatter and confound them. Then the roars
In still redoubled violence that ensued,
I weened the clamour of outraged demons
Bellowing in wrathful anguish. Then methought
I heard them growling in their burning chariots
Far, far away, above the fields of air,
One after one. It was a passing thought,
A wild and sinful one—God pardon me!
But when the glorious sun looked from on high,
Through golden windows opening in the cloud,
In mild and glowing majesty, it was
Like a glad glimpse of heaven to me, who had
Sat in the shadow of infernal gloom
Amid its horror, uproar, and turmoil;
I could not choose but hail the God of Day,
And King of Glory, on his triumph won."

Marion Graham.

Awake, my bonnie Marion Graham,
And see this scene before it closes:
The eastern lift is a' on flame,
And a' besprinkled o'er wi' roses.
It is a sight will glad your e'e,
A sight my Marion lo'es to see.

Here are the streaks of gowden light,
Fair as my Marion's locks o' yellow;
And tints of blue as heavenly bright
As smile within her e'e sae mellow;
Her cheeks, young roses, even seem
To dimple in yon heavenly beam.

Awake, my bonnie Marion Graham,
Ye never saw sae bright adorning;
I canna bear that my sweet dame
Should lose the pleasures o' this morning;
For what wad a' its beauties be
Without some likeness unto thee?

I see thee in the silver stream,
The budding rose, and graceful' willow:
I see thee in yon morning beam,
And beauty of the glowing billow;
I see thy innocence and glee
In every lamb that skims the lea.

And could you trow it, lovely May!
I see thee in the hues of even:
Thy virgin bed the milky way,
Thy coverlet the veil of heaven:
There have I seen a vision dim
Hush'd by an angel's holy hymn.

And, Marion, when this morn, above
The gates of heaven, I saw advancing
The morning's gem—the star of love,
My heart with rapture fell a-dancing;
Yet I in all its rays could see,
And all its glories, only thee.

Ah, Marion Graham, 'tis e'en ower true,
And Gude forgie my fond devotion!
In earth's sweet green, and heaven's blue,
And all the dyes that deck the ocean,
The scene that brings nae mind o' thee
Has little beauty to my e'e.

Get up, you little wily knave!
I ken your pawky jinks an' jeering;
You like to hear your lover rave,
An' gar him trow ye dinna hear him;
Yet weel this homage you'll repay—
Get up, my love, an' come away!

To the Genius of Shakspeare.

Spirit all limitless,
Where is thy dwelling-place?
Spirit of him whose high name we revere,
Come on thy seraph wings,
Come from thy wanderings,
And smile on thy votaries, who sigh for thee here!

Come, O thou spark divine!
Rise from thy hallowed shrine;
Here in the windings of Forth thou shalt see
Hearts true to nature's call,
Spirits congenial,
Proud of their country, yet bowing to thee.

Here, with rapt heart and tongue,
While our fond minds were young,
Oft thy bold numbers we poured in our mirth;
Now in our hall for aye
This shall be holiday,
Bard of all Nature, to honour thy birth.

Whether thou tremblest o'er
Green grave of Elsinore,
Stayest o'er the hill of Dunsinnan to hover,
Bosworth, or Shrewsbury,
Egypt, or Phillippi;
Come from thy roamings the universe over.

Whether thou journey'st far
On by the morning star,
Dream'st on the shadowy brows of the moon,
Or linger'st in fairyland,
Mid lovely elves to stand,
Singing thy carols unearthly and boon;—

Here thou art called upon,
Come thou to Caledon!
Come to the land of the ardent and free!
The land of the lone recess,
Mountain and wilderness,
This is the land, thou wild meteor, for thee!

Oh, never since time had birth,
Rose from the pregnant earth
Gems such as late have in Scotia sprung;—
Gems that in future day,
When ages pass away,
Like thee shall be honoured, like thee shall be sung!

Then here, by the sounding sea,
Forest, and greenwood tree,
Here to solicit thee cease shall we never:
Yes, thou effulgence bright,
Here must thy flame relight,
Or vanish from Nature for ever and ever!

The Auld Man's Farewell to his Wee House.

I like ye weel, my wee auld house,
Though laigh the wa's an' flat the riggin':
Though round thy lum the sourick grows,
An' rain-draps gaw my cozy biggin'.

Lang hast thou happit mine an' me,
My head's grown gray aneath thy kipple;
An' aye thy ingle cheek was free
Baith to the blind man an' the cripple:

An' to the puir forsaken wight
Wi' bairnie at her bosom cryin',
My cot was open day an' night,
Nor wanted bed for sick to lie in.

What gart my ewes thrive on the hill,
An' kept my little store increasin'?—
The rich man never wished me ill,
The puir man left me aye his blessin'.

Troth, I maun greet wi' thee to part,
Though to a better house I'm flittin';
Sic joys will never glad my heart
As I've had by thy hallan sittin'.

My bonnie bairns around me smiled;
My sonsie wife sat by me spinnin',
Aye liltin' owre her ditties wild,
In notes sae artless and sae winnin'.

Our frugal meal was aye a feast;
Our e'enin' psalm a hymn of joy:
Aye calm an' peacefu' was our rest;
Our bliss, our love without alloy.

I canna help but haud thee dear,
My auld, storm-battered hamely sheilin';
Thy sooty lum an' kipples clear
I better lo'e than gaudy ceilin'.

Thy roof will fa', thy rafters start,
How damp an' cauld thy hearth will be!
Ah, sae will soon ilk honest heart,
That erst was blithe an' bauld in thee.

I thought to cower aneath thy wa',
Till death had closed my weary e'en;
Then left thee for the narrow ha',
Wi' lowly roof o' swaird sae green.

Fareweel, my house an' burnie clear,
My bourtree bush an' bowzy tree;
The wee while I maun sojourn here,
I'll never find a hame like thee!

The Battle of Busaco.

Beyond Busaco's mountains dun,
When far had rolled the sultry sun,
And night her pall of gloom had thrown
O'er nature's still convexity;

High on the heath our tents were spread:
The cold turf was our cheerless bed;
And o'er the hero's dew-chilled head
The banners flapped incessantly.

The loud war-trumpet woke the morn,
The quivering drum, the pealing horn;
From rank to rank the cry is borne—
"Arouse, for death or victory!"

The orb of day, in crimson dye,
Began to mount the morning sky;
Then what a scene for warrior's eye
Hung on the bold declivity!

The serried bayonets glittering stood
Like icicles on hills of blood;
An aërial stream, a silver wood
Reeled in the flickering canopy.

Like waves of ocean rolling fast,
Or thunder-cloud before the blast,
Massena's legions, stern and vast,
Rushed to the dreadful revelry.

The pause is o'er—the fateful shock
A thousand thousand thunders woke:
The air grows sick, the mountains rock;
Red ruin rides triumphantly.

Light boiled the war-cloud to the sky,
In phantom towers and columns high,
But dark and dense their bases lie
Prone on the battle's boundary.

The thistle waved her bonnet blue,
The harp her wildest war-notes threw,
The red rose gained a fresher hue,
Busaco, in thy heraldry!

NEWARK CASTLE

ON THE YARROW

BLACKIE & SON GLASGOW EDINBURGH & LONDON

Hail, gallant brothers! woe befall
The foe that braves our triple wall!
Thy sons, O wretched Portugal,
Roused at their deeds of chivalry.

The Gipsies.

Hast thou not noted on the bye-way side,
Where England's loanings stretch unsoiled and wide,
Or by the brook that through the valley pours,
Where mimic waves play lightly through the flowers—
A noisy crew, far straggling in the glade,
Busied with trifles or in slumber laid;
Their children lolling round them on the grass,
Or pestering with their sports the patient ass!

The wrinkled grandam there you may espy,
The ripe young maiden with the glossy eye,
Men in their prime—the striplings dark and dun,
Scathed by the storms and freckled by the sun:
Oh, mark them well, when next the group you see
In vacant barn, or resting on the lea!
They are the remnant of a race of old—
Spare not the trifle for your fortune told.
For there shalt thou behold with nature blent
A tint of mind in every lineament;
A mould of soul distinct, but hard to trace,
Unknown except to Israel's wandering race;
For thence, as sages say, their line they drew—
Oh, mark them well! the tales of old are true.

'Tis told that once in ages long gone by,
When Christian zeal ran to extremity;
When Europe, like a flood no might could stem,
Poured forth her millions on Jerusalem;
One roaming tribe of Araby they won,
Bent on the spoil and foray just begun.
Great was their value—every path they knew,
Where sprung the fountain, where the forage grew,
And better wist than all the Christian men
How to mislead and vex the Saracen.

But when the nations by experience knew
Their folly, and from eastern realms withdrew,
The alien tribe durst not remain behind,
Empires and hordes against them were combined.
Thither they came.—But still the word of Heaven
Stedfast remains to ancient Abram given:
"Wild shall they be 'mid nations from their birth,
All hands against them—theirs against all earth."
Thus still they wander unrestrained and free
As erst their fathers did in Araby.
Peopled or not—it is the same—they view
The earth as their unalienable due,
And move by one undeviating plan
To take whate'er they may—protect who can.
Strange are their annals—Oh, regard them well!
For thou hast much to hear and I to tell.

* * * * * * * * *

Verses Addressed to the Right Honourable Lady Anne Scott of Buccleuch.[1]

To her whose bounty oft hath shed
Joy round the peasant's lowly bed,
When trouble pressed, and friends were few,
And God and angels only knew—
To HER who loves the board to cheer,
And hearth of simple cottager;
Who loves the tale of rural hind,
And wayward visions of his mind,
I dedicate with high delight,
The theme of many a winter night.

What other name on Yarrow's vale
Can shepherd choose to grace his tale!
There, other living name is none
Heard with one feeling—one alone.
Some heavenly charm must name endear
That all men love, and all revere!
Even the rude boy of rustic form,
And robes all fluttering to the storm,
Whose roguish lip and graceless eye
Incline to mock the passer-by,
Walks by the Maid with softer tread,
And lowly bends his burly head,
Following with eye of milder ray
The gentle form that glides away.
The little school-nymph, drawing near,
Says with a sly and courteous leer,
As plain as eye and manner can,
"Thou lov'st me—bless thee, Lady Anne!"
Even babes catch the beloved theme,
And learn to lisp their Lady's name.

The orphan's blessing rests on thee;
Happy thou art, and long shall be:
'Tis not in sorrow, nor distress,
Nor fortune's power to make thee less.
The heart unaltered in its mood,
That joys alone in doing good,
And follows in the heavenly road,
And steps where once an angel trode;
The joys within such heart that burn,
No loss can quench nor time o'erturn.
The stars may from their orbits bend,
The mountains rock, the heavens rend,
The sun's last ember cool and quiver,
But these shall glow and glow for ever.

Then thou, who lov'st the shepherd's home,
And cherishest his lowly dome,
Oh, list the mystic lore sublime
Of fairy tales of ancient time!
I learned them in the lonely glen,
The last abodes of living men,
Where never stranger came our way
By summer night or winter day;

[1] These Verses were published in the first edition of "THE BROWNIE OF BODSBECK," as the dedication of that work

Where neighbouring hind or cot was none:
Our converse was with heaven alone;
With voices through the cloud that sung,
And brooding storms that round us hung.

O Lady, judge, if judge you may,
How stern and ample was the sway
Of themes like these, when darkness fell,
And gray-haired sires the tales would tell!
When doors were barred, and eldron dame
Plied at her task beside the flame
That through the smoke and gloom alone
On dim and unbered faces shone—
The bleat of mountain goat on high,
That from the cliff came quavering by;
The echoing rock, the rushing flood,
The cataract's swell, the moaning wood,
That undefined and mingled hum—
Voice of the desert never dumb,
All these have left within this heart
A feeling tongue can ne'er impart;
A wildered and unearthly flame,
A something that's without a name.

And, Lady, thou wilt never deem
Religious tale offensive theme;
Our creeds may differ in degree,
But small that difference sure can be!
As flowers which vary in their dyes,
We all shall bloom in paradise:
As sire who loves his children well,
The loveliest face he cannot tell—
So 'tis with us—We are the same,
One faith, one Father, and one aim.

And hadst thou lived where I was bred,
Amid the scenes where martyrs bled,
Their sufferings all to thee endeared
By those most honoured and revered;
And, where the wild dark streamlet waves,
Hadst wept above their lonely graves,
Thou wouldst have felt, I know it true,
As I have done, and aye must do.
And for the same exalted cause,
For mankind's rights, and nature's laws,
The cause of liberty divine,
Thy fathers bled as well as mine.

Then be it thine, O noble Maid,
On some still eve these tales to read;
And thou wilt read I know full well,
For still thou lov'st the haunted dell;
To linger by the sainted spring,
And trace the ancient fairy ring,
Where moonlight revels long were held
In many a lone sequestered field,
By Yarrow den, and Ettrick shaw,
And the green mounds of Carterhaugh.

Oh for one kindred heart that thought
As lady must and minstrel ought!—
That loves like thee the whispering wood,
And range of mountain solitude!
Think how more wild the greenwood scene,
If times were still as they have been;
If fairies at the fall of even,
Down from the eye-brow of the heaven,
Or some aërial land afar,
Came on the beam of rising star,
Their lightsome gambols to renew;
From the green leaf to quaff the dew,
Or dance with such a graceful tread
As scarce to bend the gowan's head!

Think if thou wert, some evening still,
Within thy wood of green Bowhill,
Thy native wood, the forest's pride,—
Lover or sister by thy side:
In converse sweet the hour to improve,
Of things below and things above,
Of an existence scarce begun,
And note the stars rise one by one:—
Just then, the moon and day-light blending,
To see the fairy bands descending,
Wheeling and shivering as they came,
Like glimmering shreds of human frame;
Or sailing 'mid the golden air,
In skiffs of yielding gossamer.

Oh, I would wander forth alone
Where human eye hath never shone,
Away o'er continents and isles,
A thousand and a thousand miles,
For one such eve to sit with thee,
Their strains to hear and forms to see!
Absent the while all fears of harm,
Secure in Heaven's protecting arm:
To list the songs such beings sung,
And hear them speak in human tongue;
To see in beauty, perfect, pure,
Of human face the miniature,
And smile of being free from sin,
That had not death impressed within.
Oh, can it ever be forgot
What Scotland had, and now has not?

Such scenes, dear Lady, now no more
Are given, or fitted as before
To eye or ear of guilty dust;
But when it comes, as come it must,
The time when I, from earth set free,
Shall turn the spark I fain would be;
If there's a land, as grandsires tell,
Where brownies, elves, and fairies dwell,
There my first visit shall be sped—
Journeyer of earth, go hide thy head!
Of all thy travelling splendour shorn,
Though in thy golden chariot borne,
Yon little cloud of many a hue
That wanders o'er the solar blue—
That do I challenge and engage
To be my travelling equipage,
Then onward, onward far to steer,
The breeze of heaven my charioteer;

The soul's own energy my guide,
Eternal hope my all beside.
At such a shrine who would not bow!—
Traveller of earth, where art thou now?

Then let me for these legends claim
My young, my honoured lady's name;
That honour is reward complete,
Yet I must crave, if not unmeet,
One little boon—delightful task
For maid to grant, or minstrel ask!

One day thou mayest remember well,
For short the time since it befell,
When, o'er thy forest bowers of oak,
The eddying storm in darkness broke.
Loud sung the blast adown the dell,
And Yarrow lent her treble swell;
The mountain's form grew more sublime,
Wrapt in its wreaths of rolling rime;
And Newark Cairn, in hoary shroud,
Appeared like giant o'er the cloud.
The eve fell dark, and grimly scowled,
Loud and more loud the tempest howled;
Without was turmoil, waste, and din,
The kelpie's cry was in the linn—
But all was love and peace within:
And aye, between, the melting strain
Poured from thy woodland harp amain,
Which mixing with the storm around,
Gave a wild cadence to the sound.

That mingled scene, in every part,
Hath so impressed thy shepherd's heart
With glowing feelings, kindling bright
Some filial visions of delight,
That almost border upon pain,
And he would hear those strains again.
They brought delusions not to last,
Blending the future with the past;
Dreams of fair stems in foliage new,
Of flowers that spring where others grew,
Of beauty ne'er to be outdone,
And stars that rise when sets the sun,
The patriarchal days of yore,
The mountain music heard no more,
With all the scene before his eyes,
A family's and a nation's ties—
Bonds which the heavens alone can rend,
With chief, with father, and with friend.
No wonder that such scene refined
Should dwell on rude enthusiast's mind!
Strange his reverse!—he never wist—
Poor inmate of the cloud and mist!
That ever he, as friend, should claim
The proudest Caledonian name.

Moralitas.

She that giveth heart away
For the homage of a day,
To a downy dimpling chin,
Smile that tells the void within—
Swaggering gait, and stays of steel—
Saucy head and sounding heel—
Gives the gift of woe and weeping;
Gives a thing not worth the keeping;
Gives a trifle—gives a toy:
Sweetest viands soonest cloy.

Gains—Good Lord! what doth she gain?—
Years of sorrow and of pain;
Gains the curse that leaves her never;
Gains the pang that lasts for ever.

And why! Ah, hath not reason shown it,
Though the heart dares hardly own it?
Well it traces love to be
The fruit of the forbidden tree;
The test of that angelic creature;
The touchstone of her human nature,
Which proved her, though of heavenly birth,
An erring meteor of the earth.

And what, by Heaven's sovereign will,
Was trial once is trial still;
It is the fruit that virgin's eye
Can ne'er approach too cautiously;
It is the fruit that virgin's hand
Must never touch but on command
Of parent, guardian, friends in common—
Approved both by man and woman;
Else woe to her as maid or wife!
For all her days of mortal life,
The curse falls heavy on her crime,
And heavier wears by length of time:
And, as of future joys to reft her,
Upon her race that follows after.

But oh, if prudence and discretion
Baulk the forward inclination—
Cool the bosom, check the eye,
And guide the hand that binds the tie—
Then, then alone is love a treasure,
A blessing of unbounded measure,
Which every pledge of love endears:
It buds with age, and grows with years—
As from the earth it points on high,
Till its fair tendrils in the sky
Blossom in joy, and ever will,
And woman is an angel still.

A Last Adieu.

Adieu, my loved parent, the trial is o'er,
The veil o'er thy couch of forgetfulness spread;
Thy kind heart shall grieve for my follies no more,
Nor the suppliant tear for thy wanderer be shed.

Long over thy head has the tempest blown fell,
But riches, unknown, were unvalued by thee;
In the wild wast thou born, in the wild didst thou dwell,
The pupil of Nature, benevolent and free.

And never, in all her uncultured domain,
Was nourished a spirit more genial and kind;
Chill poverty could not thy ardour restrain,
Nor cloud thy gay smile, or the glow of thy mind.

When winter-wreaths lay round our cottage so small,
When fancy was ardent, and feeling was strong;
Oh! how I would long for the gloaming to fall,
To sit by thy knee and attend to thy song;

The song of the field where the warrior bled;
The garland of blossom dishonoured too soon;
The elves of the greenwood, the ghosts of the dead,
And fairies that journeyed by light of the moon.

I loved thee, my parent—my highest desire
Was 'neath independence to shield thy gray head,
But fortune denied it—extinguished the fire—
And, now thou art gone, my ambition is fled.

I loved thee, and now thou art laid in thy grave,
Thy memory I'll cherish, while memory is mine;
And the boon that my tongue aye from Heaven shall crave,
Shall be, the last blessing that hung upon thine.

Though over thy ashes no tombstone is seen,
The place shall be hallowed when ages are past;
No monument tells 'mid the wilderness green,
Where the Minstreless lies of the Border the last:

But over that grave will the lover of song,
And the lover of goodness, stand silent and sigh;
And the fays of the wild will thy requiem prolong,
And shed on thy coverlet dews of the sky.

And there from the rue and the rose's perfume,
His dew-web of dawn shall the gossamer won:
And there shall the daisy and violet bloom,
And I'll water them all with the tears of a son.

Adieu, my loved parent! the trial is past—
Again thy loved bosom my dwelling may be;
And long as the name of thy darling shall last
All due be the song and the honour to thee!

On the Death of Mr. Pitt.

And art thou departed, ere yet from the field
The tidings of glory are borne!
Oh, art thou departed, our bulwark, our shield,
And live I thy exit to mourn!
Our country's horizon for ever is shorn
Of a splendour that stedfastly shone;
The darkness is shed, and the storm is gone forth;
Our sun and our moon have both dropped to the earth;
The child of the mighty is come to the birth,
But the strength of the parent is gone.

O Pitt! I may wail thee, and wail without blame,
For here cannot party deride;
'Twas in the lone wild I first heard of thy name,
With Nature alone for my guide,
That taught me to love thee: my boast and my pride
Thenceforth thou hast been, and shalt be:
I read, and I wondered—but still I read on;
My bosom heaved high with an ardour unknown,
But I found it congenial in all with thine own,
And I took up my rest under thee.

I wondered when senators sternly expressed
Disgust at each motion of thine;
For I was as simple as babe at the breast,
And their motives I could not divine.
I knew not—and still small the knowledge is mine—
Of the passions that mankind dissever—
That minds there are framed like the turbulent ocean,
That fumes on its barriers with ceaseless commotion;
On the rock that stands highest, commanding devotion,
There dash its rude billows for ever.

They said thou wert proud—I have pondered it long—
I have tried thee by plummet and line—
Have weighed in the balance the right and the wrong,
And am forced in the charge to combine.
They called thee ambitious—a censure condign!
I know it—I own it was true!
But it was of *thy country alone* thou wert *proud;*
Thy *ambition* was all for her glory and good;
For these thy proud heart a wild torrent withstood,
Which broke what it could not subdue.

Be hallowed thy memory, illustrious shade!
A shepherd can ill understand;
But he weens that as clear and unbiassed a head,
As clean and less sordid a hand,
Or a heart more untainted, did never command
The wealth of a nation on earth;
And he knows that long hence, when his head's low as thine,
That the good, and the great, and the brave, and benign,
And the lovers of country and king, will combine
To hallow the hour of thy birth!

The Dawn of July, 1810.

Hail, lovely July! fair and gay,
Thou risest with this holy day;
The radiance of thy infant ray
Betokens gay hilarity.

How sweet to us the rising flush!—
But why that rosy maiden blush,
While from the vale and verdant bush
Distils the melting melody?

Is it, because when met thy view
Edina, set 'mid hills of dew,
And spires that bore the welkin blue,
There all was dead serenity;

No eye the glorious scene to scan,
When up thy silken veil was drawn,
And broad yon orb of flame began
To mount the green wave's canopy!

But welcome thou, sweet summer's queen!
Arrayed in robes of gaudy green,
With stripes and dazzling gems between,
In richest wild variety.

The hedge-row bends in lines of snow,
Deep blossoms o'er the valleys blow,
And wild-flowers deck the mountain's brow,
In modest sweet simplicity.

Fair harbinger of plenty nigh,
Calm be thy course, and mild thy sky:
That tear that glistens in thine eye
Adds beauty to thy majesty.

Yet have I seen on life's lone way,
Its dawn, like thine, as fair and gay:
And all its splendours dashed away
By storms of black adversity!

On the Close of the Year 1812.

Dunedin, thy skirts are unhallowed and lone,
And dark are the rocks that encircle thy throne;
The dwelling of beings unbodied is there—
There are spirits abroad, let the traveller beware!

The year on the brink of eternity hung,
The clock had rung long, and the watchman had sung,
And just when the murmurs of midnight grew still,
A symphony broke from the shelve of the hill:
It was not by man, for no mortal was there—
There are spirits abroad, let the traveller beware!
They sung of the year that was passing away,
And the stars hid their blushes in curtain of gray.

Dirge.

Thou art gone, thou art gone, with thy sceptre of dread!
With thy brands of destruction, and wains of the dead;
With thy rolls and thy registers, bloated with woe,
And thy millions of souls to the mansions below.
At the fall of thy bier shall time's sepulchre sigh,
And thy winding-sheet all the lone dwellings shall dye:
Oh, well o'er the shoreless abyss mayest thou shiver,
Down, down to the centre, for ever and ever!

These strains were at midnight heard floating in air:
There are spirits abroad, let the traveller beware!

Epitaph on a Living Character.

Warrior, when the battle's o'er,
Tumult, terror, groaning, yelling,
Come and wipe thy red claymore,
O'er this low and lonely dwelling!

Weep the prince of prank and pother;
Warrior, weep a fallen brother.

When the midnight revel's done,
Lasses sleeping, alleys quiet,
Come and fire one rousing gun
O'er this king of rout and riot.
Silent now the tale of wonder,
Song of mirth and rap of thunder.

Little he for fighting cared,
Hurt or harm he wished to no man;
Face of man he little feared,
Less the face of lovely woman:
Left, for brethren dry and hearty,
Deeds of death to Bonaparte.

Warrior, dry the falling tear,
What can from the dust recover!
Cold the heart lies crumbling here,
All his fun and freaks are over;
Like the foam-bell on the river,
They are gone—and gone for ever!

On the Lifting of the Banner of Buccleuch.

AT THE GREAT FOOT-BALL MATCH ON CARTER-HAUGH, DEC. 5, 1815.

And hast thou here, like hermit gray,
Thy mystic characters unrolled
O'er peaceful revellers to play,
Thou emblem of the days of old!
Or comest thou with the veteran's smile,
Who deems his day of conquest fled,
Yet loves to view the bloodless toil
Of sons whose sires he often led!

Not such thy peaceable intent,
When, over Border waste and wood,
On foray and achievement bent,
Like eagle on the path of blood,
Symbol to ancient valour dear!
Much has been dared and done for thee—
I almost weep to see thee here,
And deem thee raised in mockery.

But no—familiar to the brave,
'Twas thine thy gleaming moon and star
Above their manly sports to wave
As free as in the field of war:
To thee the faithful clansman's shout
In revel as in rage was dear:
The more beloved in festal rout,
The better feneed when foes were near.

I love thee for the olden day,
The iron age of hardihood—
The rather that thou led'st the way
To peace and joy through paths of blood:

For were it not the deeds of weir,
When thou wert foremost in the fray,
We had not been assembled here,
Rejoicing in a Father's sway.

And even the days ourselves have known.
Alike the moral truth impress—
Valour and constancy alone
Can purchase peace and happiness.
Then hail, memorial of the brave,
The liegeman's pride, the Border's awe!
May thy gray pennon never wave
On sterner field than Carterhaugh!

Love.

Can I forget a time of generous bliss,
Of trembling hope and boundless happiness,
When neither self nor sorrow durst assail?—
That day I'll sing till my remembrance fail.

When Winter's stern and sullen reign was o'er,
And the slow wave fell lighter on the shore;
When spring-tide lengthened far the jocund eve,
And the red sun still lingered o'er the wave;
When little wild birds sought the forest land,
And poured their lays so melting and so bland—
All grew enchantment to my youthful view;
The virgin's cheek turned of a rosier hue;
The amber clouds that hung above the west,
The violet's hue, the daisy's snowy vest,
All wore a charm mine eye had never viewed—
What could it mean? Was nature all renewed?
I saw her new endearing glories well—
I looked, and sighed, but why I could not tell.
Love! What had love to do with earth or sky,
Or aught beyond a maiden's blithesome eye?
It was not love, that I was free to say—
Ah me! too soon she proved her sovereign sway.
'Twas she that lent the beauties to the scene,
Painted the clouds, and bloomed along the green,
Cheered every gambol, warbled from the spray,
And called the soul's young visions into play.

Celestial love! when first in Eden's bower,
The dire commotions of the soul had power;
When angels turned the pitying eye away
From Beauty's fall, and nature's first decay;
When first thy balm the wounded spirit knew
From heaven descending downward like the dew;
And since that time, if aught may ease the smart
Of future anguish pillowed on the heart,
It is the transport of thy blissful hour,
When smiles the eye of beauty's sweetest flower.
Oh, when two hearts in each fond hope combine,
Who would at the award of heaven repine?
Or who would change the joys his soul that thrill,
For immortality of human ill?

Say, lives there, Earth, upon thy teeming breast,
One human thing so sordid and unblest,
As ne'er that highest boon of Heaven to know,
The source, the balm of mortal life below?
Whose heart the smiles of beauty never moved?
Who ne'er as husband nor as parent loved?
No blessed spirit e'er that face shall greet,
For angel fellowship and heaven unmeet.

Gem of the soul, oh be thy treasures mine!
Thy draughts of rapture from the spring divine;
The half-assenting lip, averted eye,
And moistened glowing cheek on mine to lie.
The cordial link, the soul's eternal spring,
Lightening the woes that round our nature cling,
Our present joys, our happiness to be
In earth and heaven, must emanate from thee.

Thou art that feeling generous and refined,
That hallowed scion grafted on the mind,
That in its blossom, though with blush repressed,
Verges to beauty or congenial breast.
But, heaven-directed, still its tendrils spread
Round nature's bourn, the living and the dead;
Till at the last, the sun and stars above,
'Tis grafted in the fields of light and love,
In that blest land from whence its being came,
To bloom through all eternity the same.

Stanzas.

Recited in a party of Social Friends, met in honour of the entry into Paris by the Allies—1814.

Now, Britain, let thy cliffs o' snaw
Look prouder o'er the merled main,
The bastard Eagle bears awa',
An' ne'er will e'e thy shores again.

Come, bang thy banners to the wain—
The struggle's past, the prize is won:
Weel may thy lion shake his mane,
And turn his gray beard to the sun!

Oft hae I bragged o' thine and thee,
Even when thy back was at the wa';
Now thou my proudest sang shalt be
As lang as I hae breath to draw.

Where now the cuifs who boded wae,
And cauldness o'er thy efforts threw?
And where the proudest, fellest fae,
Frae hell's black porch that ever flew?

Here's to the hands sae lang upbore
The Rose and Shamrock blooming still—
An' here's—the burly plant of yore,
The Thistle of the Norlan' hill.

Lang may auld Britain's banners pale
Stream o'er the seas her might has won—
Lang may her lions paw the gale,
And turn their dewlaps to the sun!

SAINT MARY'S LOCH
SELKIRKSHIRE.

BLACKIE & SON GLASGOW

Elegy on Lady Rosslyn.

Why sleeps the dew on that new grave,
Though all around is parched and dry,
While bending boughs incumbent wave
To shield it from the burning sky?

That crystal drop that stands so clear
Within the dew-cup's silken eye,
Is pitying Nature's holy tear,
Shed o'er her flower laid low to lie.

Here lies, within a chilly shroud,
The fairest of her works below;
Her eye, the eagle's in the cloud,
Her cheek the rose, her brow the snow.

The smile that lightened in her face
Was sweet as morning's dawn to see;
Her melting tones of love and grace
Were music by the greenwood tree.

The tear of pity in her eye
Was brighter than that dew-drop sheen;
Soft as the morning breeze her sigh,
That breathes among the birches green.

I've seen her seek the blue hare-bell,
That bends above the silver spring;
Or brush the heath-flower from the fell,
With foot as light as fairy's wing.

Or resting in the broom-wood dale,
Her soul on fancy's pinions borne,
In vision rapt, the welkin sail
Throned on the star that leads the morn.

Now mouldering in the earth so cold,
This lovely flower must quite decay;
That form of beauty's fairest mould
Become a mass of livid clay!

Yet, though I weep her early doom,
Her beauty, worth, for ever gone;
See o'er that breast the daisy bloom
Where virtue fixed her diamond throne;

The vital spark of heavenly fire
That warmed it once shall ever burn,
And wake a seraph's golden lyre,
O'er fading nature's awful urn.

St. Mary of the Lowes.

O lone St. Mary of the waves,
In ruin lies thine ancient aisle,
While o'er thy green and lowly graves,
The moorcocks bay, and plovers wail:
But mountain spirits on the gale
Oft o'er thee sound the requiem dread;
And warrior shades, and spectres pale,
Still linger by the quiet dead.

Yes, many a chief of ancient days
Sleeps in thy cold and hallow'd soil;
Hearts that would thread the forest maze,
Alike for spousal or for spoil;
That wist not, ween'd not, to recoil
Before the might of mortal foe,
But thirsted for the Border broil,
The shout, the clang, the overthrow.

Here lie those who, o'er flood and field,
Were hunted as the osprey's brood;
Who braved the power of man, and seal'd
Their testimonies with their blood:
But long as waves that wilder'd flood,
Their sacred memory shall be dear,
And all the virtuous and the good
O'er their low graves shall drop the tear.

Here sleeps the last of all the race
Of these old heroes of the hill,
Stern as the storm in heart and face:
Gainsaid in faith or principle,
Then would the fire of heaven fill
The orbit of his faded eye;
Yet all within was kindness still,
Benevolence and simplicity.

Grieve, thou shalt hold a sacred cell
In hearts with sin and sorrow toss'd;
While thousands, with their funeral knell,
Roll down the tide of darkness, lost;
For thou wert Truth's and Honour's boast,
Firm champion of Religion's sway!
Who knew thee best revered thee most,
Thou emblem of a former day!

Here lie old Border bowmen good;
Ranger and stalker sleep together,
Who for the red-deer's stately brood
Watch'd, in despite of want and weather,
Beneath the hoary hills of heather;
Even Scotts, and Kerrs, and Pringles, blended
In peaceful slumbers, rest together,
Whose fathers there to death contended.

Here lie the peaceful, simple race,
The first old tenants of the wild,
Who stored the mountains of the chase
With flocks and herds—whose manners mild
Changed the baronial castles, piled
In every glen, into the cot,
And the rude mountaineer beguiled,
Indignant, to his peaceful lot.

Here rural beauty low reposes;
The blushing cheek, and beaming eye,
The dimpling smile, the lip of roses,
Attracters of the burning sigh,
And love's delicious pangs, that lie
Enswathed in pleasure's mellow mine:
Maid, lover, parent, low and high,
Are mingled in thy lonely shrine.

And here lies one—here I must turn
From all the noble and sublime,
And, o'er thy new but sacred urn,
Shed the heath-flower and mountain-thyme,
And floods of sorrow, while I chime
Above thy dust one requiem.
Love was thine error, not thy crime,
Thou mildest, sweetest, mortal gem!

For ever hallow'd be thy bed,
Beneath the dark and hoary steep;
Thy breast may flowerets overspread,
And angels of the morning weep
In sighs of heaven above thy sleep,
And tear-drops of embalming dew;
Thy vesper hymn be from the deep,
Thy matin from the ether blue!

I dare not of that holy shade,
That's pass'd away, one thought allow;
Not even a dream that might degrade
The mercy before which I bow:
Eternal God, what is it now!
Thus asks my heart: but the reply
I aim not, wish not, to foreknow;
'Tis veil'd within eternity.

But oh, this earthly flesh and heart
Still cling to the dear form beneath,
As when I saw its soul depart,
As when I saw it calm in death:
The dead rose and funereal wreath
Above the breast of virgin snow,
Far lovelier than in life and breath—
I saw it then, and see it now.

That her fair form shall e'er decay,
One thought I may not entertain;
As she was on her dying day,
To me she ever will remain.
When Time's last shiver o'er his reign
Shall close this scene of sin and sorrow,
How calm, how lovely, how serene,
That form shall rise upon the morrow!

Frail man! of all the arrows wounding
Thy mortal heart, there is but one
Whose poison'd dart is so astounding,
That bear it, cure it, there can none.
It is the thought of beauty won,
To love in most supreme degree,
And, by the hapless flame undone,
Cut off from nature and from thee!

Superstition.

In Caledonia's glens there once did reign
A sovereign of supreme unearthly eye;
No human power her potence could restrain,
No human soul her influence deny:
Sole empress o'er the mountain homes, that lie
Far from the busy world's unceasing stir:
But gone is her mysterious dignity,
And true Devotion wanes away with her;
While in loose garb appears Corruption's harbinger.

Thou sceptic reveller—ill-framed with thee
Is visionary bard a war to wage:
Joy in thy light, thou earth-born Sadducee,
That earth is all thy hope and heritage.
Already wears thy front the line of age;
Thou see'st a heaven above—a grave before;
Does that lone cell thy wishes all engage?
Say, does thy yearning soul not grasp at more?
Woe to thy grovelling creed—thy cold ungenial lore!

Be mine to sing of visions that have been,
And cherish hope of visions yet to be;
Of mountains clothed in everlasting green,
Of silver torrent and of shadowy tree,
Far in the ocean of eternity.
Be mine the faith that spurns the bourn of time;
The soul whose eye can future glories see;
The converse here with things of purer clime,
And hope above the stars that soars on wing sublime.

But she is gone that thrilled the simple minds
Of those I loved and honoured to the last;
She who gave voices to the wandering winds,
And mounted spirits on the midnight blast.
At her behest the trooping fairies passed,
And wayward elves in many a glimmering band;
The mountains teemed with life, and sore aghast
Stood maid and matron 'neath her mystic wand,
When all the spirits rose and walked at her command.

And she could make the brown and careless boy
All breathless stand, unknowing what to fear;
Or panting deep beneath his co'erlet lie,
When midnight whisper stole upon his ear.
And she could mould the vision of the seer
To aught that rankled breast of froward wight:
Or hang the form of cerement or of bier
Within the cottage fire—O woeful sight!
That called forth many a prayer and deepened groan by night.

Oh! I have bowed to her resistless sway,
When the thin evening vapours floated nigh;
When the gray plover's wailings died away,
And the tall mountains melted into sky:
The note of gloaming bee that journeyed by
Sent through my heart a momentary knell;
And sore I feared in bush or brake might lie
Things of unearthly make—for I knew well,
That hour with danger fraught more than when midnight fell.

But oh! if ancient cemetery was near,
Or cairn of harper murdered long ago,
Or wandering pedlar for his hoarded gear,
Of such, what glen of Scotland doth not know?
Or grave of suicide, upon the brow

Of the bleak mountain, withered all and gray;
From these I held as from some deadly foe:
There have I quaked by night and mused by day:
But chiefly where I weened the bard or warrior lay.

For many a wild heart-thrilling Scottish bard,
In lowland dale the lyre of heaven that wooed,
Sleeps 'neath some little mound or lonely sward,
Where humble dome of rapt devotion stood,
Mid heathy wastes by Mary's silent flood,
Or in the moorland glen of dark Buccleuch;
There o'er their graves the heath-fowl's mottled brood,
Track with light feathery foot the morning dew;
There plays the gamesome lamb, or bleats the yeaning ewe.

Yet there still meet the thoughtful shepherd's view
The marble fount-stone, and the rood so gray;
And often there he sees with changeful hue
The snow-white skull washed by the burn away;
And O! if 'tis his chance at eve to stray,
Lone by the place where his forefathers sleep;
At bittern's whoop or gor-cock's startling bay,
How heaves his simple breast with breathings deep!
He mutters vow to Heaven, and speeds along the steep.

For well he knows, along that desert room,
The spirits nightly watch the sacred clay;
That, cradled on the mountain's purple bloom,
By him they lie, companions of the day,
His guardian friends, and listening to his lay:
And many a chant floats on the vacant air,
That spirit of the bard or warrior may
Hear the forgotten names perchance they bare:
For many a warrior wight, and nameless bard, lies there!

Those were the times for holiness of frame;
Those were the days when fancy wandered free:
That kindled in the soul the mystic flame,
And the rapt breathings of high poesy.
Sole empress of the twilight—woe is me!
That thou and all thy spectres are outworn,
For true devotion wanes away with thee;
All thy delirious dreams are laughed to scorn.
While o'er our hills has dawned a cold saturnine morn.

Long did thy fairies linger in the wild,
When vale and city wholly were resigned;
Where hoary cliffs o'er little holms were piled,
And torrents sung their music to the wind;
The darksome heaven upon the hills reclined,
Save when a transient sun-beam, through the rain,
Past, like some beauteous phantom of the mind,
Leaving the hind in solitude again—
These were their last retreats, and heard their parting strain.

But every vice effeminate has sped,
Fast as the spirits from our hills have gone;
And all these light unbodied forms are fled,
Or good or evil, save the ghost alone.

True, when the kine are lowing in the loan,
An evil eye may heinous mischief brew:
But deep enchantments to the wise are known,
That certainly the blasted herd renew,
And make the eldron crone her cantrips sorely rue.

Oh! I have seen the door most closely barred;
The green turf fire where stuck was many a pin;
The rhymes of incantation I have heard,
And seen the black dish solemnly laid in
Amid the boiling liquid—Was it sin!
Ah! no—'twas all in fair defence of right.
With big drops hanging at her brow and chin,
Soon comes the witch in sad and woeful plight;
Is cut above the breath, and, yelling, takes her flight!

And I have seen, in gaunt and famished guise,
The brindled mouser of the cot appear;
A haggard wildness darted from her eyes;
No marvel was it when the truth you hear,
That she is forced to carry neighbour near,
Swift through the night to countries far away;
That still her feet the marks of travel bear;
And her broad back, that erst was sleek and gray,
O, hapless beast!—all galled where the curst saddle lay.

If every creed has its attendant ills,
How slight were thine!—a train of airy dreams!
No holy awe the cynic's bosom thrills;
Be mine the faith diverging to extremes!
What though, upon the moon's distempered beams,
Erewhile thy matrons gallopped through the heaven,
Floated like feather on the foaming streams,
Or raised the winds by tenfold fury driven,
Till ocean blurred the sky, and hills in twain were riven.

Where fell the scathe?—The beldames were amused,
Whom eild and poverty had sorely crazed.
What, though their feeble senses were abused
By gleesome demon in the church-aisle raised,
With lion tail, and eyes that baleful blazed,
Whose bagpipe's blare made all the roof to quake!
But ages yet unborn will stand amazed
At thy dread power, that could the wretches make
Believe these things all real, and swear them at the stake.

But ah! thou filled'st the guilty heart with dread,
And brought the deeds of darkness to the day!
Who was it made the livid corse to bleed
At murderer's touch, and cause the gelid clay
By fancied movement all the truth betray?
Even from dry bones the drops of blood have sprung!
'Twas thou, Inquisitor!—whose mystic sway
A shade of terror over nature hung;
A feeling more sublime than poet ever sung.

Fearless the shepherd faced the midnight storm,
To save his flocks deep swathed amid the snow:
Though threatening clouds the face of heaven deform,
The sailor feared not o'er the firth to row;
Dauntless the hind marched forth to meet the foe:

For why? they knew, though earth and hell combined,
In heaven were registered their days below;
That there was One well able and inclined
To save them from the sword, the wave, and stormy wind.

O blissful thought to poverty and age!
When troubles press and dangers sore belay.
This is their only stay, their anchorage,
"It is the will of Heaven, let us obey!
Ill it befits the creatures of a day
Beneath a Father's chastening to repine."
This high belief in Providence's sway,
In the eye of reason wears into decline;
And soon that heavenly ray must ever cease to shine.

Yet these were days of marvel—when our king,
As chronicles and sapient sages tell,
Stood with his priests and nobles in a ring,
Searching old beldame for the mark of hell,
The test of witchcraft and of devilish spell:
And when I see a hag, the country's bane,
With rancorous heart and tongue of malice fell,
Blight youth and beauty with a burning stain,
I wish for these old times, and Stuarts back again.

Haply 'tis weened that Scotland now is free
Of witchcraft, and of spell o'er human life;
Ah me!—ne'er since she rose out of the sea,
Were they so deep, so dangerous, and so rife:
The heart of man, unequal to the strife,
Sinks down before the lightning of their eyes.
Oh! it is meet that every maid and wife
Some keen exorcist still should scrutinize,
And bring them to the test for all their sorceries.

Much have I owed thee—much may I repine,
Great Queen! to see thy honours thus decay:
Among the mountain maids the power was thine,
On blest Saint Valentine's or Hallow Day.
Ours was the omen—theirs was to obey:
Firm their belief, or most demurely feigned!
Each maid her cheek on lover's breast would lay,
And, sighing, grant the kiss so long refrained;—
'Twas sin to counteract what Providence ordained!

Oh! I remember, as young fancy grew,
How oft thou spokest in voice of distant rill;
What sheeted forms thy plastic finger drew,
Throned on the shadow of the moonlight hill,
Or in the glade so motionless and still,
That scarcely in this world I seemed to be;
High on the tempest sing thine anthem shrill;
Across the heaven upon the meteor flee;
Or in the thunder speak with voice of majesty!

All these are gone—the days of vision o'er;
The bard of fancy strikes a tuneless string.
Oh! if I wist to meet thee here no more,
My muse should wander, on unwearied wing,
To find thy dwelling by some lonely spring,
Where Norway opes her forests to the gale;
The dell thy home, the cloud thy covering;
The tuneful sea-maid, and the spectre pale,
Tending thy gloomy throne, amid heaven's awful veil.

Or shall I seek thee where the Tana rolls
Her deep blue torrent to the northern main;
Where many a shade of former huntsman prowls,
Where summer roses deck the untrodden plain,
And beauteous fays and elves, a flickering train,
Dance with the foamy spirits of the sea?
Oh! let me quake before thee once again,
And take one farewell on my bended knee,
Great ruler of the soul, which none can rule like thee!

Epitaph on a Living Character.

Whose headstone is this, that's so fretted and airy
In workmanship, planned by the wildest vagary?
There's the bolus, the pen, and the emblem of happiness,
With Venus, and Mars, and the sage Esculapius;
Fine gardens on arches, whose shades I remember;
The picture of May and the bust of November.
And yonder's an ox; faith, I almost could wager
'Tis the great king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar.
If you'll lend me a prop with your hand or your head, I shall
Read you the epitaph up from the pedestal.

"O passenger, pause o'er these sacred receptacles!
And read whom they hold, though you put on your spectacles:
Remember in season your God and your duty,
Else vain is your knowledge, your riches, or beauty:
If these had as guards stood this chilly abode upon,
Never had these two lain here to be trod upon.

"Here, next to the sun, lies as bold and as rich a man,—
Ah, no, but the ashes of one that was such a man;
Of spirit decisive, of genius undoubted;
And as for his learning it ne'er was disputed.
The fire of the sky and the ray of simplicity
Were both led in train by a proud eccentricity:
Yet now, when he's gone, you may safely aver it,
His countrymen knew not one half of his merit.

"And here by his side lies a sweet lovely creature,
A dew-sprinkled rose in the garden of nature,
Who blossomed and smiled in the richest maturity,
Then died as she lived, in submission and purity.
Yes, both are laid low here, as sure as you'd seen it,
And no man is sure of his life for a minute.

"Go home to your book or your business, and when ye go,
Turn not aside to the tavern or bagnio;

But hold on your way with a firm resolution,
A day is approaching of fair retribution;
And when to the tomb they your carcase deliver,
For good or for evil ye're settled for ever!"

Morning.

Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!
Over gorse, green broom, and braken,
From her sieve of silken blue
Dawning sifts her silver dew,
Hangs the emerald on the willow,
Lights her lamp below the billow,
Bends the brier and branchy braken—
Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!

Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!
Deep the moon her draught has taken
Of the babbling rivulet sheen,
Far beyond the Ochil green.
From her gauzy veil on high
Trills the laverock's melody;
Round and round, from glen and grove,
Pour a thousand hymns to love;
Harps the quail amid the clover,
O'er the moon-fern whews the plover;
Bat has hid, and heath-cock crowed,
Courser neighed, and cattle lowed,
Kid and lamb their lair forsaken;—
Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!

See how light the wood-fly dances!
Swifter still the dawn advances;
Streaming in her eagle talon
Waves her bright and broad gonfalon;
Specks of purple, sprigs of yellow,
Roof her radiant light umbrella;
Pretty limner! see her hue
Painted on the amber dew,
On the leaf of beech and willow,
On the lake and sleepy billow;—
Rouse thee, slumberer, from thy pillow!

Human life is but a day;
Gay its morn, but short as gay;
Day of evil—day of sorrow!
Hope—even hope can paint no morrow.
Steeped in sloth or passions boiling,
Noon shall find thee faint and toiling:
Evening rears her mantle dreary;
Evening finds thee pale and weary.
Prospects blasted,—aims misguided,—
For the future ill provided,—
Murmuring, worn, enfeebled, shaking—
Days of sorrow, nights of waking—
Yield thy soul unto the Giver;
Bow thy head, and sleep for ever!
Rise, O rise, to work betake thee!
Wake thee, drowsy slumberer, wake thee!

The Fall of the Leaf.

The flush of the landscape is o'er,
The brown leaves are shed on the way,
The dye of the lone mountain flower
Is grown wan, and betokens decay.

The Spring in our valleys is born,
Like the bud that it fostered, to die;
Like the transient dews of the morn,
Or the vapour that melts in the sky.

Thus youth, with its visions so gay,
Departs like a dream of the mind;
To pleasure and passion a prey,
It often leaves sorrow behind.

Its virtues too buoyant to grow,
Its follies too latent to die;
We shall reap of the seeds we then sow,
When the stars have dissolved in the sky.

Our Summer now flits o'er the main,
And leaves but her mantle behind;
Short time will that mantle remain,
Expelled by the chill winter wind.

All silent the song of the thrush,
Bewildered she cowers in the dale;
The black-bird sits sad on the bush;
The fall of the leaf they bewail.

Thus I may sit silent and sigh,
Before me the cold lonely urn;
My youth and my prime are gone by,
And, alas! they can never return.

All nature thus tends to decay,
And to drop as the leaves from the tree;
And man—just the flower of a day,
How long, long his winter will be!

But the grain, late adorning the field,
With its soft heaving billows so pale,
More gain to its owner will yield,
Than if still waving sweet in the vale:

So the breast where firm virtue and reason
Could every wild passion subdue;
The fall of his leaf is a season
That man may with pleasure review.

At suffering he will not despond,
Nor at death when his sorrows shall cease,
While hope points his eye far beyond
To a mansion of virtue and peace.

Eternity's streamers unfurled,
Time's tear o'er his tottering throne,
The last rending crash of the world,
The sky with its orbs overthrown,

He will view with a soul all serene;
And will welcome the dawn of the day
Which in glory shall open a scene
Of perfection that cannot decay.

A Witch's Chant.

Thou art weary, weary, weary.
Thou art weary and far away!
Hear me, gentle spirit, hear me;
Come before the dawn of day.

I hear a small voice from the hill,
The vapour is deadly, pale, and still—
A murmuring sough is on the wood,
And the witching star is red as blood.

And in the cleft of heaven I scan
The giant form of a naked man;
His eye is like the burning brand,
And he holds a sword in his right hand.

All is not well: by dint of spell,
Somewhere between the heaven and hell
There is this night a wild deray;
The spirits have wander'd from their way.

The purple drops shall tinge the moon,
As she wanders through the midnight noon;
And the dawning heaven shall all be red
With blood by guilty angels shed.

Be as it will, I have the skill
To work by good or work by ill;
Then here's for pain, and here's for thrall,
And here's for conscience, worst of all!

Another chant, and then, and then,
Spirits shall come or Christian men—
Come from the earth, the air, or the sea:
Great Gil-Moules, I cry to thee!

Sleep'st thou, wakest thou, lord of the wind!
Mount thy steeds and gallop them blind;
And the long-tailed fiery dragon outfly,
The rocket of heaven, the bomb of the sky.

Over the dog-star, over the wain,
Over the cloud, and the rainbow's mane.
Over the mountain, and over the sea,
Haste—haste—haste to me!

Then here's for trouble and here's for smart,
And here's for the pang that seeks the heart;
Here's for madness, and here's for thrall,
And here's for conscience, the worst of all!

Regret.

What makes that lulling brook complain,
While softly round the valley sweeping?
What makes the blackbird's morning strain
Sound like the voice of woe and weeping?

Alas! I fear the sylvan bower
Has lost its sweets of morn and even,
Since I have flung the sweetest flower,
That ever breathed the breeze of heaven.

Sing on, thou bonny bird of Spring!
Thy little heart with love is heaving;
Far hast thou wandered on the wing,
But not thy love behind thee leaving;

But I have left my native glade,
The silent bower, and scented blossom;
And I have left the sweetest maid,
That ever heaved a snowy bosom.

I saw the round, the crystal tear,
How could my stern reproach abuse her!
I loved her—yes, I loved her dear—
How could my jealous mind accuse her!

How often from the evening fall
I've wooed her fondly till the morrow;
She gave her heart—it was her all—
And yet I left that heart to sorrow.

Sing on, thou bonny bird of morn,
Above the broom-wood waving yellow;
Thy love sits listening in the thorn,
Delighted with thy music mellow.

Thou call'st the red sun from the sea,
He hastes above the wave to hear thee;
The evening star steals o'er the tree,
With simple ray of love to cheer thee.

Long may thy melody renew
The fondest hope of faithful lover;
And morning weave her mantle blue
Thy dwelling in the greenwood over!

Her silver sleys of fairy weft,
Of former joys alone remind me;
My bliss is fled since I have left
My dear, my injured maid behind me.

A Bard's Address to his Youngest Daughter.

Come to my arms, my dear wee pet,
My gleesome, gentle Harriet!
The sweetest babe art thou to me
That ever sat on parent's knee;
Thy every feature is so cheering,
And every motion so endearing.
Thou hast that eye was mine erewhile,
Thy mother's blithe and grateful smile,
And such a playful, merry mien,
That care flies off whene'er thou'rt seen.

And, if aright I read thy mind,
The child of nature thou'rt design'd;
For, even while yet upon the breast,
Thou mimick'st child, and bird, and beast;

Can'st cry like Maggie o'er her book,
And crow like cock, and caw like rook,
Boo like a bull, or blare like ram,
And bark like dog, and bleat like lamb,
And when afield in sunshine weather,
Thou minglest all these sounds together:
Then who can say, thou happy creature,
Thou'rt not the very child of nature!

Child of my age and dearest love!
As precious gift from God above,
I take thy pure and gentle frame,
And tiny mind of mounting flame;
And hope that through life's chequer'd glade—
That weary path that all must tread—
Some credit from thy name will flow
To the old bard who loved thee so.
At least, thou shalt not want thy meed—
His blessing on thy beauteous head,
And prayers to him whose sacred breath
Lighten'd the shades of life and death—
Who said with sweet benignity,
"Let little children come to me."

And now, sweet child, one boon I crave—
And pout not, for that boon I'll have—
One kiss I ask for grandam's sake,
Who never saw thy tiny make:
And one for her who left us late,
Laid low, but not forgotten yet:
And thy sweet mother, too, the nearest
To thee and me, the kindest, dearest—
Thou sacred, blest memorial,
When I kiss thee, I kiss them all!

'Tis very strange, my little dove!
That all I ever loved, or love,
In wondrous visions still I trace
While gazing on thy guiltless face:
Thy very name brings to my mind
One, whose high birth and soul refined,
Withheld her not from naming me,
Even in life's last extremity.
Sweet babe! thou art memorial dear
Of all I honour and revere!

Come, look not sad: though sorrow now
Broods on thy father's thoughtful brow,
And on the reverie he would dwell—
Thy prattle soon will that expel.
—How darest thou frown, thou freakish fay!
And turn thy chubby face away,
And pout, as if thou took'st amiss
Thy partial parent's offer'd kiss?
Full well I know thy deep design:
'Tis to turn back thy face to mine,
With triple burst of joyous glee,
And fifty strains at mimicry!

Crow on, sweet child! thy wild delight
Is moved by visions heavenly bright:
What wealth from nature may'st thou gain,
With promptings high to heart and brain!
But hope is all—though yet unproved,
Thou art a shepherd's best beloved:
And now above thy brow so fair,
And flowing films of flaxen hair,
I lay my hand once more, and frame
A blessing, in the holy name
Of that supreme divinity,
Who breathed a living soul in thee.

Elegy.

Fair was thy blossom, tender flower,
That opened like the rose in May,
Though nursed beneath the chilly shower
Of fell regret for love's decay!

How oft thy mother heaved the sigh,
O'er wreaths of honour early shorn,
Before thy sweet and guiltless eye
Had opened on the dawn of morn!

How oft above thy lowly bed,
When all in silence slumbered low,
The fond and filial tear was shed,
Thou child of love, of shame, and woe!

Her wronged but gentle bosom burned
With joy thy opening bloom to see,—
The only breast that o'er thee yearned,
The only heart that cared for thee.

Oft her young eye, with tear-drops bright,
Pleaded with Heaven for her sweet child,
When faded dreams of past delight
O'er recollection wandered wild.

Fair was thy blossom, bonny flower,
Fair as the softest wreath of spring,
When late I saw thee seek the bower
In peace thy morning hymn to sing!

Thy little feet across the lawn
Scarce from the primrose pressed the dew:
I thought the spirit of the dawn
Before me to the greenwood flew.

Even then the shaft was on the wing,
Thy spotless soul from earth to sever;
A tear of pity wet the string
That twanged, and sealed thy doom for ever.

I saw thee late the emblem fair
Of beauty, innocence, and truth,
Start tiptoe on the verge of air,
'Twixt childhood and unstable youth;

But now I see thee stretched at rest,
(To break that rest shall wake no morrow;)
Pale as the grave-flower on thy breast,
Poor child of love, of shame, and sorrow!

May thy long sleep be soft and sweet,
Thy visions fraught with bliss to be;
And long the daisy, emblem meet,
Shall shed its earliest tear o'er thee.

Verses to the Comet of 1811.

How lovely is this wildered scene,
As twilight from her vaults so blue
Steals soft o'er Yarrow's mountains green,
To sleep embalmed in midnight dew!

All hail, ye hills, whose towering height,
Like shadows, scoops the yielding sky!
And thou, mysterious guest of night,
Dread traveller of immensity.

Stranger of heaven, I bid thee hail;
Shred from the pall of glory riven,
That flashest in celestial gale,
Broad pennon of the King of heaven!

Art thou the flag of woe and death,
From angel's ensign-staff unfurled?
Art thou the standard of his wrath,
Waved o'er a sordid sinful world?

No, from that pure pellucid beam,
That erst o'er plains of Bethlehem shone,[1]
No latent evil we can deem,
Bright herald of the eternal throne!

Whate'er portends thy front of fire,
Thy streaming locks so lovely pale;
Or peace to man, or judgments dire,
Stranger of heaven, I bid thee hail!

Where hast thou roamed these thousand years?
Why sought these polar paths again,
From wilderness of glowing spheres,
To fling thy vesture o'er the wain?

And when thou scal'st the milky way,
And vanishest from human view,
A thousand worlds shall hail thy ray
Through wilds of yon empyreal blue.

Oh on thy rapid prow to glide!
To sail the boundless skies with thee.
And plough the twinkling stars aside,
Like foam-bells on a tranquil sea;

To brush the embers from the sun,
The icicles from off the pole,
Then far to other systems run,
Where other moons and planets roll!

Stranger of heaven! Oh let thine eye
Smile on a rapt enthusiast's dream;
Eccentric as thy course on high,
And airy as thine ambient beam.

And long, long may thy silver ray
Our northern arch at eve adorn;
Then, wheeling to the east away,
Light the gray portals of the morn.

[1] It was reckoned by many that this was the same comet which appeared at the birth of our Saviour.

1828.

Thou art gone! thou-art gone with thy sceptre of mildness,
Thy smiles, and thy tears, and thy moments of wildness;
But this humble memorial to thee I dedicate,
Mild 1828.[2]

For thou hast dispell'd our despairing and sadness,
And industry and toil hast enlighten'd with gladness,
And bustled in our harbours with commerce and freight,
Blest 1828.

The reaper rejoiced as he counted his sowing,
And heap'd up his garners and barns to o'erflowing;
And thy winter has breathed with a soft autumn heat,
Kind 1828.

No frost ever sheeted our rivers and fountains,
No drifted snow ever cover'd our mountains,
And thou leavest our flocks on an evergreen height,
Sweet 1828.

In the region of love thy reign has been glorious,
In the hearts of the maidens thy sceptre victorious;
And there will yet be news of great moment and weight,
Of 1828.

It is true thou hast run some extravagant rigs,
Making idiots and fools of the Catholics and Whigs;
But still thou hast left us triumphant as yet,
Strong 1828.

Thou hast chilled the soul of the mariner with wonder,
Thou hast howl'd in the wind, thou hast boom'd in the thunder;
But the smiles of repentance in thee were innate,
Good 1828.

Thou hast garnish'd the fields of Greece that were gory,
(Restored to her quiet, but not to her glory!)
And humbled the pride of a vain autocrat,
Brave 1828.

Thou art gone! thou art gone, to return to us never;
In the sepulchre of Time thou art shrouded for ever;
And the shadows of oblivion shall over thee set,
Mild 1828.

[2] For the sake of the rhythm, name the year thus:—"Eighteen hundred twenty and eight."

The Monitors.

The lift looks cauldrife i' the west,
The wan leaf wavers frae the tree,
The wind touts on the mountain's breast
A dirge o' waesome note to me.
It tells me that the days o' glee,
When summer's thrilling sweets entwined,
An' love was blinkin' in the e'e,
Are a' gane by an' far behind;

That winter wi' his joyless air,
An' grizzly hue, is hasting nigh,
An' that auld age, an' earkin' care,
In my last stage afore me lie.
Yon chill and cheerless winter sky,
Troth, but 'tis eerisome to see,
For ah! it points me to descry
The downfa's o' futurity.

I daurna look into the east,
For there my morning shone sae sweet;
An' when I turn me to the west,
The gloaming's like to gar me greet.
The deadly hues o' snaw and sleet
Tell of a dreary onward path;
Yon new moon on her cradle sheet,
Looks like the Hainault scythe of death.

Kind Monitors! ye tell a tale
That oft has been my daily thought,
Yet, when it came, could nought avail:
For sad experience, dearly bought,
Tells me it was not what I ought,
But what was in my power to do,
That me behoved. An' I hae fought
Against a world wi' courage true.

Yes—I hae fought an' won the day;
Come weel, come woe, I carena by;
I am a king! My regal sway
Stretches o'er Scotia's mountains high.
And o'er the fairy vales that lie
Beneath the glimpses o' the moon,
Or round the ledges of the sky,
In twilight's everlasting noon.

Who would not choose the high renown,
'Mang Scotia's swains the chief to be,
Than be a king, an' wear a crown,
'Mid perils, pain, an' treachery?
Hurra! The day's my own—I'm free
Of statemen's guile an' flattery's train;
I'll blaw my reed of game an' glee,
The Shepherd is himself again!

"But, bard—ye dinna mind your life
Is waning down to winter snell—
That round your hearth young sprouts are rife,
An' mae to care for than yoursell."
Yes, that I do—that hearth could tell
How aft the tear-drap blinds my e'e;
What can I do, by spur or spell,
An' by my faith it done shall be.

And think—through poortith's eiry breach,
Should want approach wi' threatening brand,
I'll leave them canty sangs will reach
From John o' Groats to Solway strand.
Then what are houses, goud, or land,
To sic an heirship left in fee?
An' I think mair o' auld Scotland,
Than to be fear'd for mine or me.

True, she has been a stepdame dour,
Grudging the hard-earn'd sma' propine;
On a' my efforts looking sour,
An' seem'd in secret to repine.
Blest be Buccleuch an' a' his line,
For ever blessed may they be!
A little hame I can ca' mine
He rear'd amid the wild for me.

Goodwife—without a' sturt or strife,
Bring ben the siller bowl wi' care:
Ye are the best an' bonniest wife,
That ever fell to poet's share;
An' I'll send o'er for Frank—a pair
O right good hearted chiels are we—
We'll drink your health—an' what is mair,
We'll drink our laird's wi' three times three.

To the young shepherd, too, we'll take
A rousing glass wi' right good-will;
An' the young ladies o' the lake,
We'll drink in ane—an awfu' swill!
Then a' the tints o' this warld's ill
Will vanish like the morning dew,
An' we'll be blithe an' blither still—
Kind winter Monitors, adieu!

This warld has mony ups an' downs,
Atween the cradle an' the grave,
O' blithesome haun's an' broken crowns,
An' douks in chill misfortune's wave;
All these determined to outbrave,
O'er fancy's wilds I'll wing anew,
As lang as I can lilt a stave,—
Kind winter Monitors, adieu!

SACRED MELODIES.

Jewish Captives Parting.

Must I leave thee broken-hearted,
All our hopes for ever thwarted:
Early met, and early parted,
Yet while love was new?—
Just when the bud had fondly spread
Its breast to heaven, with blushes red,
The fruit, within its bosom hid,
Shrunk from its fostering dew?

There's a pang (I may not name it!
Heart of alien cannot frame it,
Tongue of angel cannot blame it)
Wrings this bosom still:—
Oh! thou art all with softness blent,
Mild as the lamb, and innocent;
But thou art in the stranger's tent,
And subject to his will.

Bitterer term was never spoken!
Take this last, this farewell token,
All my hopes with it are broken,
Save in one sole deed:
On that pure breast and form so fair,
Should eye or hand of violence dare—
I say no more: but to thy care
I trust this sure remede.

How is the gold become so dim!
How hushed the virgin's choral hymn!
Our cup of misery wets the brim,
'Tis slavery or the grave.
Was ever sorrow like to mine!
The daughters young of Judah's line
Are led in bonds and shame to pine,
And none to help or save!

The Captive's Song.

Rise, rise, dawn of the morn!
In glory awake, for thy hour is nigh!
Comest thou afar, by cherubim borne,
O'er lands of the East, o'er star and sky?
Or sleep'st thou on yon mountain gray?—
Awake, thou sun! and come away.
Yes, thou wilt wake; but, woe is me,
For the shame and guilt thine eye must see!—
The stranger's incense burning still
On the heights of Zion's holy hill;
And the rude Sabine's altar-stone
In the green groves of Lebanon!

Awake, O sun! that I may view
Thy splendour shed (nor grieve the less)
O'er vales of Kedar bathed in dew,
And Chebar's balmy wilderness!
Soon thou wilt smile in beauty bland
Above the Chaldean's sinful land;
But, oh! when shall dawn the day
Of retribution and of grace?
When shall the shadows pass away
That brood o'er Israel's fallen race?
Thou holy One! has Salem's day
By thee forgotten been for aye?

Sing! sing!—How shall I sing
A song of Zion or of thee?
Or hymn the name of Israel's King
In darkness and captivity?
My tabor has no strain nor string
The songs of Zion's land to sing.
But thee—Jerusalem! when my heart
Ceases to yearn and bleed for thee,
May skill from my right hand depart,
And my reward let bondage be!
There lies engraved thy temple fair,
And Name that *once* we worshipped there!

Jehovah, in thy strength awake;
Be vengeance on the heathen driven;
Before thee let the mountains quake,
Thy chariot be the winds of heaven!
Come on the clouds, and who shall stand
Against the sway of thy right hand?
Think not of us, so far removed,
And as a garment cast away—
Think on our fathers once beloved:
Must David's house like grass decay?
Return, and set thy people free,
And captives yet shall sing to thee!

Jacob and Laban.

"Depart ye—depart ye—
For shame, ere the morrow!
Alone let me weep,
In anguish and sorrow,

For her whom so long
I've loved with fond duty;
For all I have lost
Of sweetness and beauty.

"These seven long years
I've served hardly for her;
Yet they seemed but a day,
For the love that I bore her.
The chill hour of midnight
Oft watching has found me,
While the wolf and the lion
Were prowling around me.
Shame on the gift! shame on the giver!
Woe, woe, now and for ever!"

"Cheer thee, boy!—cheer thee, boy!
Blame not her willingness;
Bound to obey,
And swayed by her lovingness.
Striplings may woo,
But age must beware of them;
Laws must be framed,
And strangers must care for them.

"Love's like the young rose;
Pulled, it will fade and die
Love's like the diamond;
Hardly won, valued high:
For seven years more,
She will kinder and dearer grow;
Thine shall thy love be,
When thou hast won her so."
"Blest be the boon! blest be the giver!
Joy, joy, now and for ever!"

The Rose of Sharon.

Oh! saw ye the Rose of the East
In the valley of Sharon that grows?
Ye daughters of Judah, how blest
To breathe in the sweets of my Rose!
Come, tell me if yet she's at rest
In her couch, with the lilies inwove?
Or if wantons the breeze with her breast?
For my heart it is sick for my love.

I charge you, ye virgins unveiled,
That stray 'mong the pomegranate trees,
By the roes and the hinds of the field,
That ye wake not my love till she please!
"The garden with flowers is in blow,
And roses unnumbered are there;
Then tell how thy love we shall know,
For the daughters of Zion are fair."

A bed of frankincense her cheek,
And wreath of sweet myrrh is her hand;
Her eye the bright gem that they seek
By the rivers and streams of the land:
Her smile from the morning she wins;
Her teeth are the lambs on the hill:
Her breasts two young roes that are twins,
And feed in the valleys at will.

As the cedar that smiles o'er the wood;
As the lily 'mid shrubs of the heath;
As the tower of Damascus that stood
Overlooking the hamlets beneath:
As the moon that in glory you see
'Mid the stars and the planets above;
Even so among women is she,
And my bosom is ravished with love!

Return with the evening star,
And our couch on Amana shall be;
From Shinar and Hermon afar
Thou the mountains of leopards shalt see.
O Shulamite! turn to thy rest,
Where the olive o'ershadows the land;
As the roe of the desert make haste.
For the singing of birds is at hand!

Maiden of Jeshimon.

DUET.

1st voice. Oh, lives one love-spark in your breast,
Maiden of Jeshimon, pray you tell!
2d voice. Go ask at her whom you now love best.
Ask her the way you know full well.
1st voice. Women are fickle, and all untrue!
2d voice. Men are ungrateful—so are you!
1st voice. Vanity!
2d voice. Lenity!
Both voices. Wormwood and gall!
2d voice. Suavity!
1st voice. Levity!
Both voices. Worst of all!
Once full happy and blithe were we,
Blithe as bird on the greenwood tree!

1st voice. Long I loved, and loved you dear,
2d voice. Many a day and many a year:
Both voices. Then all nature seemed completer—
Smiling sweeter.
Ah, how dear!
1st voice. But 'tis gone!
2d voice. Let it go!
1st voice. Can'st thou say so, true love?
2d voice. Time, that wears all away,
Will lay me low! } *Recitante.*
Both voices. Again we'll sport, as we have done,
Round the tree, over the lea:
Nature then shall smile again,
And who so blithe and blest as we?
Sweet the bird shall sing on the tree,
And sweet the sun rise over the sea!

Dweller in Heaven.

Dweller in heaven high, ruler below,
Fain would I know thee, yet tremble to know!
How can a mortal deem, how may it be,
That being can ne'er be but present with thee?
Is it true that thou sawest me ere I saw the morn?
Is it true that thou knewest me before I was born?
That nature must live in the light of thine eye?
This knowledge for me is too great and too high!

That, fly I to noon-day, or fly I to night,
To shroud me in darkness, or bathe me in light,
The light and the darkness to thee are the same,
And still in thy presence of wonder I am?
Should I with the dove to the desert repair,
Or dwell with the eagle in clough of the air:
In the desert afar—on the mountain's wild brink—
From the eye of Omnipotence still must I shrink!

Or mount I, on wings of the morning, away
To caves of the ocean, unseen by the day,
And hide in these uttermost parts of the sea.
Even there to be living and moving in thee:
Nay, scale I the cloud, in the heavens to dwell,
Or make I my bed in the shadows of hell,
Can science expound, or humanity frame,
That still thou art present, and all are the same?

Yes, present for ever! Almighty! Alone!
Great Spirit of nature, unbounded, unknown.
What mind can embody thy presence divine!
I know not my own being, how can I thine?
Then humbly and low in the dust let me bend,
And adore what on earth I can ne'er comprehend:
The mountains may melt, and the elements flee,
Yet an universe still be rejoicing in thee![1]

On Carmel's Brow.

On Carmel's brow the wreathy vine
Had all it honours shed;
And, o'er the vales of Palestine,
A sickly paleness spread;
When the old seer, by vision led
And energy sublime,
Into that shadowy region sped,
To muse on distant time.

He saw the valleys far and wide,
But sight of joy was none;
He looked o'er many a mountain's side,
But silence reigned alone;
Save that a boding voice sung on
By wave and waterfall,
As still, in harsh and heavy tone,
Deep unto deep did call.

On Kison's strand, and Ephratah,
The hamlets thick did lie;
No wayfarer between he saw,
No Asherite passed by:
No maiden at her task did ply,
Nor sportive child was seen;
The lonely dog barked wearily
Where dwellers once had been.

Oh! beauteous were the palaces
On Jordan wont to be;
And still they glimmered to the breeze,
Like stars beneath the sea—
But vultures held their jubilee
Where harp and cymbal rung;
And there, as if in mockery,
The baleful satyr sung.

But, oh! that prophet's visioned eye,
On Carmel that reclined,
It looked not on the times gone by,
But those that were behind;
His gray hair streamed upon the wind—
His hands were raised on high—
As, mirrored on his mystic mind,
Arose futurity.

He saw the feast in Bozrah spread,
Prepared in ancient day;
Eastward, away the eagle sped,
And all the birds of prey.
"Who's this," he cried, "comes by the way
Of Edom, all divine,
Travelling in splendour, whose array
Is red, but not with wine?

"Blest be the herald of our King,
That comes to set us free!
The dwellers of the rock shall sing,
And utter praise to thee!
Tabor and Hermon yet shall see
Their glories glow again,
And blossoms spring on field and tree,
That ever shall remain.

"The happy child, in dragon's way,
Shall frolic with delight;
The lamb shall round the leopard play,
And all in love unite.
The dove on Zion's hill shall light,
That all the world must see;
Hail to the Journeyer in his might,
That comes to set us free!"

The Guardian Angels.

DUET.

Whither journeyest thou?
Where dost thou dwell?
Dwell'st thou in the rainbow,
Or hills of Israel?

[1] This hymn was introduced into the tale of "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," and is to be found there, in the first edition.

Beauteous guardian angel,
Tarry here with me;
Or guide me through the twilight,
Far, far, with thee!
The young and fair
We'll guard with care,
From every snare
And treachery.

Two Voices.

Over tower and palace,
River broad, and fountain—
Over den and desert,
Vale and lofty mountain—
Infant's bed—virgin's head—
Age and misery!

1st voice. Dost thou dread it?
2d voice. Thou shalt see.
1st voice. Dost thou shun it?
2d voice. Oft I've done it.
Both voices. Kind the heart that needs no suing!
Sweet the toil when good we're doing!
Sweet the toil, &c., &c.
1st voice. Wert thou a watcher here!
2d voice. Many a thousand year.
Both voices. Then, for aye, our task pursuing,
Never done, yet always doing,
Till our time of bliss draws near.
1st voice. Shall it never!
2d voice. Yes, for ever.
Both voices. Then our joys be ever new,
As our love and duty true!
Our task is love, and 'tis from above,
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS.

Where am I gaun?

Where am I gaun?—I darena tell;
Alas! I hardly ken mysel':
There's something burning in my brain,
That leads me out this gate my lane.
It's no to be where I hae been,
It's no to see wha I hae seen;
Ah no! 'tis to the cauld kirkyard,
To greet aboon the lonely sward.

Oh, my Matilda! when with pain,
I left thy side to cross the main,
I left all dearest to my life,
A new made mother and a wife.
I see thee still—thou sobb'd and wept
Above our baby as he slept:
That look of sorrow, and that tear,
My very soul, till death, will sear.

I kiss'd thee—left thee—where art thou?
I have no wife nor baby now;
I look around me in despair,
And then to heaven, for they are there.
I did not see my baby die;
I did not close his mother's eye;
Nor hear a blessing from her tongue,
When the last sigh upon it hung.

When death had reft her baby sweet,
She wound him in his winding sheet,
An' followed to his grave, resigned,
But ah! she could not stay behind.

Where am I gaun? I know it now;
To a dear grave—aye, there are two;
A very low and little one
Lies 'twixt the other and the sun.

There I must wend, though all alone;
An inward anguish drags me on,
O'er these new graves, beneath the yew,
My tears to mingle with the dew.
For all that to my soul endear'd,
I lov'd, I cherish'd, and rever'd,
Lie there within a lowly shrine—
Can there be earthly woe like mine?

The sweetest bud that ever grew
Has faded like the morning dew;
The parent stem that gave it birth,
Has sunk into her native earth.
My wife—my baby—Oh how sweet!
But there's a home where we shall meet;
Beyond yon blue and diamond dome,
We'll find an everlasting home.

An aged Widow's Lament.

Oh, is he gane, my good auld man?
And am I left forlorn?
And is that manly heart at rest,
The kindest e'er was born?

We've sojourn'd here, thro' hope and fear,
For fifty years and three,

And ne'er in all that happy time
Said he harsh word to me.

And mony a braw and buirdly son,
And daughters in their prime,
His trembling hand laid in the grave,
Lang, lang afore the time.

I dinna greet the day to see
That he to them has gane;
But oh, it's fearful thus to be
Left in a world alane,

Wi' a poor worn and broken heart,
Whose race of joy is run,
And scarce has little opening left
For aught aneath the sun.

My life nor death I winna crave,
Nor fret, nor yet despond;
But a' my hope is in the grave,
And the dear hame beyond.

M'Kimman.

Is your war-pipe asleep, and for ever, M'Kimman?
Is your war-pipe asleep, and for ever?
Shall the pibroch that welcomed the foe to Ben-Aer
Be hushed when we seek the red wolf in his lair,
To give back our wrongs to the giver?
To the raid and the onslaught our chieftains have gone—
Like the course of the fire-flaught their clansmen pass'd on;
With the lance and the shield 'gainst the foe they have bound them,
And have taken the field with their vassals around them.
Then raise the wild slogan-cry, On to the foray!
Sons of the heather-hill, pine-wood, and glen;
Shout for M'Pherson, M'Leod, and the Moray,
Till the Lomonds re-echo the challenge again.

Youth of the daring heart, bright be thy doom
As the bodings which light up thy bold spirit now;
But the fate of M'Kimman is closing in gloom,
And the breath of the gray wraith hath pass'd o'er his brow.
Victorious in joy thou'lt return to Ben-Aer,
And be clasp'd to the hearts of thy best beloved there;
But M'Kimman, M'Kimman, M'Kimman shall never—
O never—never—never—never!

Wilt thou shrink from the doom thou can shun not, M'Kimman!
Wilt thou shrink from the doom thou can shun not?
If thy course must be brief, let the proud Saxon know
That the soul of M'Kimman ne'er quail'd when a foe
Bared his blade in the land he had won not.
Where the light-footed roe leaves the wild breeze behind,
And the red heather-bloom gives its sweets to the wind—
There our broad pennon flies, and our keen steeds are prancing
'Mid the startling war-cries, and the bright weapons glancing!
Then raise the wild slogan-cry, On to the foray!
Sons of the heather-hill, pine-wood, and glen;
Shout for M'Pherson, M'Leod, and the Moray,
Till the Lomonds re-echo the challenge again!

Song of the times of Charles First.

See now, my brethren, heaven is clear,
And all the clouds are gone;
The righteous man shall flourish now—
Brave days are coming on.
Come then, dear comrades, and be glad,
And eke rejoice with me;
Lawn sleeves and rochets shall go down,
And hey, then up go we!

Whate'er the bishops' hands have built,
Our hammers shall undo;
We'll break their pipes, and burn their copes,
And burn their churches too.
We'll exercise within the groves,
And preach beneath the tree!
We'll make a pulpit of a cask,
And hey, then up go we!

We'll down with deans and prebends too,
And I rejoice to tell ye,
How we shall eat good pigs our fill,
And capons stew'd in jelly.
We'll burn the fathers' learned books,
And make the schoolmen flee;
We'll down with all that smells of wit,
And hey, then up go we!

If once the greedy churchmen crew
Be crush'd and overthrown,
We'll teach the nobles how to stoop,
And keep the gentry down.
Good manners have an ill report,
And turn to pride we see;
We'll therefore cry good manners down,
And hey, then up go we!

The name of lord shall be abhorr'd,
For every man's a brother;
No reason why, in church or state,
One man should rule another.

Now when this change of government
Has set our fingers free,
We'll make their saucy dames come down,
And hey, then up go we!

What though the king and parliament
Do now accord together!
We have more cause to be content,
This is our sunshine weather.
For if that reason should take place,
And they should disagree,
For us there would be little grace;
For hey, then up go we!

What should we do then in such case!
Let's put it to a venture;
If we can hold out seven years' space,
We'll sue out our indenture.
A time may come to make us rue,
Yet time may set us free,
Unless the gallows claim his due.
And hey, then up go we!

Gin ye meet a Bonnie Lassie.

Gin ye meet a bonnie lassie,
Gie her a kiss and let her gae;
But gin ye meet a dirty hussey,
Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.
Nought is like a bonnie lassie,
Brisk an' bonnie, blithe and gay;
But gin ye meet a dirty hussey,
Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.

Be sure ye dinna quat the grip
O ilka joy while ye are young,
Afore auld age your veetals nip,
An' lay ye twafauld ower a rung.
But look out for a bonnie lassie,
Brisk an' bonnie, blithe an' gay;
But gin ye meet a dirty hussey,
Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.

Auld age an' youth has joys apart,
An' though they dinna weel combine,
The honest, kind, an' gratefu' heart
Will aye be blithe like your's an' mine.
But nought is like a bonnie lassie,
Dearer gift Heav'n never gae;
But gin ye meet a dirty hussey,
Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.

Moggy an' me.

Oh wha are sae happy as me an' my Moggy?
Oh wha are sae happy as Moggy an' me?
We're baith turnin' auld, an' our walth is soon tauld.
But contentment bides aye in our cottage sae wee.
She toils a' the day when I'm out wi' the hirsel,
An' chants to the bairns while I sing on the brae;
An' aye her blithe smile welcomes me frae my toil,
When down the glen I come weary an' wae.

Aboon our auld heads we've a nice little biggen,
That keeps out the cauld when the simmer's awa;
We've twa wabs o' linen o' Moggy's ain spinnin',
As thick as silk velvet and white as the snaw;
We've kye in the byre, an' yauds in the stable,
A grumphie sae fat that she hardly can stand:
An' something, I guess, in yon auld painted press
To cheer up the speerits an' steady the hand.

'Tis true we hae had mony sorrows an' crosses,
Our pouches oft toom, an' our hearts fu' o' care;
But wi' a' our crosses, our sorrows an' losses,
Contentment, thank heaven! has aye been our share.
I've an auld roostit sword that was left by my father,
Whilk aye has been drawn when my king had a fae;
We hae friends ane or twa that aft gie us a ca',
To laugh when we're happy or grieve when we're wae.

Our duke may hae gould mair than schoolmen can reckon,
An' flunkies to watch ilka glance o' his e'e,
His lady aye braw sittin' prim in the ha';
But are they sae happy as Moggy an' me?
A' ye wha ne'er fand the straight road to be happy,
Wha are nae content wi' the lot that ye dree,
Come down to the dwellin' o' whilk I've been tellin',
You'll learn it by looking at Moggy an' me.

Rise! Rise! Lowland and Highland men.

Rise! rise! lowland and highland men:
Bald sire and beardless son, each come, and early:
Rise! rise! mainland and island men;
Belt on your broadswords, and fight for Prince Charlie!
Down from the mountain steep,
Up from the valley deep,
Out from the clachan, the bothy, and sheeling;
Bugle and battle-drum,
Bid chief and vassal come:
Loudly our bagpipes the pibroch are pealing.

CHORUS.

Rise, rise, &c.

Men of the mountains!—descendants of heroes!
Heirs of the fame and the hills of your fathers,—
Say, shall the Sassenach Southron not fear us,
When fierce to the war-peal each plaided clan gathers?
Long on the trophied walls
Of your ancestral halls
Rust hath been blunting the armour of Albin:

Seize, then, ye mountain Macs,
Buckler and battle-axe,
Lads of Lochaber, Brae-Mar, and Breadalbane.

CHORUS.

Rise, rise, &c.

When hath the tartan plaid mantled a coward!
When did the bonnet blue crest the disloyal!
Up, then, and crowd to the standard of Stuart!
Follow your hero, the rightful, the royal.
Come, chief of Clanronald,
And gallant M'Donald;
Come Lovet, Lochiel, with the Grant and the Gordon;
Rouse every kilted clan,
Rouse every loyal man;
Musket on shoulder, and thigh the broadsword on!

CHORUS.

Rise! rise! lowland and highland men;
Bald sire to beardless son, each come, and early:
Rise! rise! mainland and island men;
Belt on your broadswords, and fight for Prince Charlie!

Lock the Door, Lariston.

"Lock the door, Lariston, lion of Liddesdale;
Lock the door, Lariston, Lowther comes on:
The Armstrongs are flying,
The widows are crying,
The Castletown's burning, and Oliver's gone!

"Lock the door, Lariston—high on the weather-gleam
See how the Saxon plumes bob on the sky—
Yeomen and carbineer,
Billman and halberdier,
Fierce is the foray, and far is the cry!

"Beweastle brandishes high his broad scimitar:
Ridley is riding his fleet-footed grey;
Hidley and Howard there,
Wandale and Windermere;
Lock the door, Lariston; hold them at bay.

"Why dost thou smile, noble Elliot of Lariston?
Why does the joy-candle gleam in thine eye?
Thou bold Border ranger,
Beware of thy danger;
Thy foes are relentless, determined, and nigh."

Jock Elliot raised up his steel bonnet and lookit,
His hand grasp'd the sword with a nervous embrace;
"Ah, welcome, brave foemen,
On earth there are no men
More gallant to meet in the foray or chase!

"Little know you of the hearts I have hidden here;
Little know you of our moss-troopers' might—
Linhope and Sorbie true,
Sundhope and Milburn too,
Gentle in manner, but lions in fight!

"I have Mangerton, Ogilvie, Raeburn and Netherbie,
Old Sim of Whitram, and all his array;
Come all Northumberland,
Teesdale and Cumberland,
Here at the Breaken tower end shall the fray!"

Scowled the broad sun o'er the links of green Liddesdale,
Red as the beacon-light tipped he the wold;
Many a bold martial eye,
Mirror'd that morning sky,
Never more oped on his orbit of gold.

Shrill was the bugle's note, dreadful the warrior's shout,
Lances and halberds in splinters were borne;
Helmet and hauberk then
Braved the claymore in vain,
Buckler and armlet in shivers were shorn.

See how they wane—the proud files of the Windermere!
Howard! ah, woe to thy hopes of the day!
Hear the wide welkin rend,
While the Scots' shouts ascend—
"Elliot of Lariston, Elliot for aye!"

The Bower of Tay.

AIR—"*Maid of Isla.*"

Wear away, ye hues of spring,
Ye blooms of summer fade away;
Round the welcome season bring
That leads my steps to Highland Tay.
Dear to me the day—the hour,
When last her winding wave I saw,
But dearer still the bonnie bower
That lies aneath yon greenwood shaw.

Aye we sat, and aye we sighed,
For there was one my arms within;
Aye the restless stream we eyed,
And heard its soft and soothing din:
The sun had sought Glen-Lyon's glade,
Forth peered the evening's modest gem;
And every little cloud that strayed
Looked gaudy in its gowden hem.

The playful breeze across the plain
Brought far the wood-lark's wooer tale,
And gambolled o'er the mellow grain
In mimic waves adown the dale.
I saw the drops of dew so clear
Upon the green leaf trembling lie,
And, sweeter far, the crystal tear
That trembled in a lovely eye.

When lovers meet, 'tis to the mind
The spring-flush of the blooming year:
But oh! their parting leaves behind
A glow to memory ever dear.

Ettrick's fairy banks are green,
And Yarrow braes are mooned with gray;
But gloaming fall was never seen
Like that I viewed in bower of Tay.

The Bittern's Quabering Trump on High.

The bittern's quavering trump on high—
The beetle's drowsy distant hum—
Have sung the day's wild lullaby,
And yet my Peggie is not come.

The golden primrose from the wood,
The scented hawthorn's snowy flower,
Mixed with the laurel buds, I've strewed
Deep in my Peggie's woodland bower.

Oh come, my love! the branches link
Above our bed of blossoms new;
The stars behind their curtains wink
To spare thine eyes so soft and blue.

No human eye nor heavenly gem,
With envious smile our bliss shall see;
The mountain ash his diadem
Shall spread to shield the dews from thee.

Oh let me hear thy fairy tread
Come gliding through the broomwood still;
Then on my bosom lean thy head,
Till dawning crown the distant hill.

And I will watch thy witching smile,
List what has caused thy long delay,
And kiss thy melting lips the while,
Till dies the sweet reproof away.

The Lassie of Yarrow.

"What makes my heart beat high,
What makes me heave the sigh,
When yon green den I spy,
Lonely and narrow?
Sure on your braken lea
Under the hawthorn tree,
Thou hast bewitched me,
Lassie of Yarrow!"

"Yon braken den so lone,
Rueful I ponder on;
Lad, though my vow ye won,
'Twas to deceive thee.
Sore, sore I rue the day
When in your arms I lay,
And swore by the hawthorn gray,
Never to leave thee."

"Mary, thy will is free;
All my fond vows to thee
Were but in jest and glee;
Could'st thou believe me?
I have another love
Kind as the woodland dove;
False to that maid to prove,
Oh, it would grieve me!"

Mary's full eye so blue,
Mild as the evening dew,
Quick from his glance withdrew,
Soft was her sighing;
Keen he the jest renewed,
Hard for his freedom sued—
When her sweet face he viewed,
Mary was crying.

"Cheer thee," the lover said,
"Now thy sharp scorn repaid,
Never shall other maid
Call me her marrow.
Far sweeter than sun or sea,
Or aught in this world I see,
Is thy love-smile to me,
Lassie of Yarrow!"

The Soldier's Widow.[1]

AIR—"*The Birks of Invermay.*"

The flag waved o'er the castle wa',
The hind came lilting o'er the lea,
Loud joy rang through the lighted ha',
An' ilka ane was blithe but me;
For, ah! my heart had tint its glee,
Although the wars had worn away—
The breast, that used my stay to be,
Was lying cauld in foreign clay.

I lookit east, I lookit west,
I saw the darksome coming even—
The wild bird had its cozie nest,
The kid was to the hamlet driven:
But house nor hame aneath the heaven,
Except the skeuch of greenwood tree,
To seek a shelter in was given
To my three little bairns and me.

I had a prayer I cou'dna say,
I had a vow I cou'dna breathe—
For aye they led my words astray,
An' aye they were connected baith
Wi' ane wha now was cauld in death:
I lookit round wi' watery e'e—
Hope wasna there, but I was laith
To see my little babies dee.

Just as the breeze the aspen stirred,
And bore aslant the falling dew,
I thought I heard a bonnie bird
Singing amid the air so blue:

[1] Sung at the Institution of the Caledonian Asylum.

It was a lay that did renew
The hope deep sunk in misery;
It was of ane my woes that knew,
And some kind hearts that cared for me.

Oh, sweet as breaks the rising day,
Or sunbeam through the wavy rain,
Fell on my soul the cheering lay—
Was it an angel poured the strain?—
Wha kens a yearning mother's pain,
Bent o'er the child upon her knee?
Oh, mine will bless, and bless again
The generous hearts that cared for me.

A cot was reared by mercy's hand
Amid the Grampian wilderness—
It rose as if by magic wand,
A shelter to forlorn distress.
An' weel I ken that Heaven will bless
The hearts that issued the decree—
The widow and the fatherless
Can never pray an' slighted be.

John of Brackadale.

AIR—"*Nuair a thig an Samhra.*"

Came ye o'er by Moravieh?
Saw ye John of Brackadale?
At his nose a siller quaich,
At his knee a water pail.
Copper nose and haffets gray,
Bald head and bosom hale,
John has drunken usquebae,
Mair than a' Loch Brackadale.
Hey John! ho John!
Hey John of Brackadale!

Hey John! ho John!
Waes me gin ye should fail,
Auld John, bauld John,
Brave John of Brackadale!

But John will wear away,
And the weary usquebae
Will grow cheaper by a third
When they delve him in the yird.
Oh, the gay hearts at Portree
Will lament sair for thee!
And I mysel' raise sic a wail
A' the rocks of Skye shall peal!
Hey John! ho John! &c.[1]

[1] In a subsequent edition the concluding verse runs thus:—

Sic a carle, to wear away,
An' lye down quiet in the yird,
Just when the glorious usquebae
Is growing cheaper by a third—
It winna do—I'll no believe it,
For ne'er was carle sae blithe an' hale:
Then hey for routh o' barley bree,
An' brave John o' Brackadale.

Why should I Sit an' Sigh.

AIR—"*Cnochd a Bheanniehd.*"

Why should I sit an' sigh
When the greenwood blooms sae bonnie?
Laverocks sing, flowrets spring,
A' but me are cheery.
Ochon, O ri! there's something wanting,
Ochon, O ri! I'm weary;
Nae young, blithe, an' bonnie lad,
Comes o'er the knowe to cheer me.
Ochon, O ri! there's something wanting, &c.

When the day wears away,
Sair I look adown the valley,
Ilka sound wi' a stound
Sets my heart a thrilling:
When I see the plover rising,
Or the curlew wheeling,
Then I trow some bonnie lad
Is coming to my shieling.
Ochon, O ri! there's something wanting, &c.

Come away, come away,
Herd, or hind, or boatman laddie;
I hae cow, kid and ewe,
Gowd and gear to gain thee!
My wee cot is blessed and happy;
Oh, 'tis neat and cleanly!
Sweet the brier that blooms beside it,
Kind the heart that's lanely:
Ochon, O ri! there's something wanting, &c.

The Last Cradle Song.

AIR—"*My love's shoulders are broad and square.*"

A Border Melody.

Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawlililu,
Light be thy care and cumber;
Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawlililu,
Oh, sweet be thy sinless slumber.
Ere thou wert born my youthful heart
Yearned o'er my babe with sorrow;
Long is the night-noon that we must part,
But bright shall arise the morrow.

Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawlililu,
Here no more will I see thee;
Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawlililu,
Oh, sair is my heart to lea' thee.
But far within yon sky so blue,
In love that fail shall never,
In valleys beyond the land of the dew,
I'll sing to my baby for ever.

What gars the Parting Day-beam Blush?

AIR—"*Gae fetch to me a pint of wine.*"

What gars the parting day-beam blush,
An' linger owre yon summit lowering?
It sees me in the greenwood bush,
Ahint the brier an' willow cowering.
The gloaming starn keeks owre the yoke,
An' strews wi' gowd the stream sae glassy;
The raven sleeps aboon the rock,
An' I wait for my bonnie lassie.

Weel may I tent the siller dew,
That comes at e'en sae saftly stealing;
The silken hue, the bonnie blue
Of nature's rich an' radiant ceiling;
The lily lea, the vernal tree;
The night breeze owre the broom-wood creeping;
The fading day, the milky way,
The star-beam on the water sleeping:

For gin my Jeanie war but here,
My flower sae lovely an' sae loving,
I'll see nought but her e'en sae clear,
I'll hear nought but her accents moving.
Although the bat wi' velvet wing
Wheels round our bed sae damp an' grassy,
Oh, I'll be happier than a king,
Locked in thy arms, my bonnie lassie!

Nae art hast thou, nae pawkie wile,
The rapid flow of love impelling;
But oh, the love that lights thy smile
Wad lure an angel frae his dwelling!
Can I—can ane o' human race
Ere wound thy peace or evil treat thee!
For sure thy bonnie harmless face
Wad melt the lion's heart to pity.

Alas! that love's relucent lowe
A bleered regret should ever sloken;
That heavenly gleed, that living glow,
Of endless happiness the token.
I'll fling my waes upon the wind;
Ye warldly cares, I'll lightly pass ye;
Nae thought shall waver through my mind
But raptures wi' my bonnie lassie.

This primrose bank shall be our bed,
Our canopy the waving willow,
This briery brake shall guard our head,
Its wild rose nodding owre our pillow:
Her lips, her bosom, pressed to mine,
Ah, paradise, it must surpass ye!
I'll ask nae purer joys divine,
Than sic a bower, an' sic a lassie.

Poor Little Jessie.

Oh, what gart me greet when I parted wi' Willie,
While at his guid fortune ilk ane was sae fain!
The neighbours upbraidit an' said it was silly,
When I was sae soon to see Willie again.

He gae me his hand as we gaed to the river,
For oh, he was aye a kind brother to me;
Right sair was my heart from my Willie to sever,
An' saut was the dew-drop that smartit my e'e.

It wasna the kiss that he gae me at parting,
Nor yet the kind squeeze that he gae to my hand;
It wasna the tear frae his blue eye was starting,
As slow they war shoving the boat frae the land:
The tear that I saw owre his bonnie cheek straying,
It pleased me indeed, but it doubled my pain:
For something within me was constantly saying,
"Ah, Jessie, ye'll never see Willie again!"

The bairn's unco wae to be taen frae its mother,
The wee bird is wae when bereaved o' its young,
But oh, to be reft of a dear only brother—
That feeling can neither be paintit nor sung.
I dreamed a' the night that my Willie was wi' me,
Sae kind to his Jessie, at meeting sae fain,
An' just at the dawning a friend came to see me,
An' taul me I never wad see him again.

I hae naebody now to look kind an' caress me;
I look for a friend, but nae friend can I see;
I dinna ken what's to become o' poor Jessie,
The warld has little mair pleasure for me.
It's lang sin' I lost baith my father and mother,
I'm simple, an' poor an' forlorn on the way;
I had ane that I likit, an only dear brother,
My Willie—but he's lying cauld i' the clay.[1]

Ah, Peggie, since thou'rt gane awa'.

AIR—"*Royal Highlanders' March.*"

Ah, Peggie, since thou'rt gane away,
An' left me here to languish,
I canna fend anither day
In sic regretfu' anguish.
My mind's the aspen i' the vale
In ceaseless waving motion;
'Tis like a ship without a sail
On life's unstable ocean.

I downa bide to see the moon
Blink owre the glen sae clearly:
Ainee on a bonnie face she shone,
A face that I looed dearly.
An' when beside yon water clear,
At e'en I'm lanely roaming,
I sigh an' think, if ane was here,
How sweet wad fa' the gloaming!

[1] In the first draft the concluding stanza is as follows:—

I hae naebody now to look kind an' caress me;
I look for a friend, but nae friend can I see;
I dinna ken what's to become o' poor Jessie,
Life has nae mair comfort or pleasure for me.
Hard want may oppress me, and sorrow harass me,
But dearest affection shall ever remain,
An' wandering weary this wilderness dreary,
I'll lang for the day that will meet us again.

When I think on thy cheerfu' smile,
Thy words sae free an' kindly,
Thy pawkie e'e's bewitching wile,
The unbidden tear will blind me.
The rose's deepest blushing hue
Thy cheek could eithly borrow,
But ae kiss o' thy cherry mou'
Was worth a year o' sorrow.

Oh! in the slippery paths of love,
Let prudence aye direct thee;
Let virtue every step approve,
An' virtue will respect thee.
To ilka pleasure, ilka pang,
Alack! I am nae stranger;
An' he wha ance has wandered wrang
Is best aware o' danger.

May still thy heart be kind an' true,
A' ither maids excelling;
May heaven distil its purest dew
Around thy rural dwelling.
May flowerets spring, an' wild-birds sing
Around thee late an' early;
An' oft to thy remembrance bring
The lad that lo'ed thee dearly.

The Broom sae Green.

Lang I sat by the broom sae green,
An' oh, my heart was eerie,
For aye this strain was breathed within,
Your laddie will no come near ye!
Lie still, thou wee bit fluttering thing,
What means this weary wavering?
Nae heart returns thy raptured spring,
Your laddie will no come near ye!

His leifu' sang the robin sung
On the bough that hung sae near me;
Wi' tender grief my heart was wrung,
For oh, the strain was dreary!
The robin's sang it coudna be
That gart the tear-drap blind my e'e;
How ken'd the wee bird on the tree
That my laddie wad no come near me!

The new-wean'd lamb on yonder lea
It bleats out through the braken,
The herried bird upon the tree
Mourns o'er its nest forsaken;
If they are wae, how weel may I?
Nae grief like mine aneath the sky;
The lad I lo'e he cares nae by,
Though my fond heart is breaking!

Flora Macdonald's Farewell.

Far over yon hills of the heather sae green,
An' down by the correi that sings to the sea,
The bonnie young Flora sat sighing her lane,
The dew on her plaid, and the tear in her e'e.
She look'd at a boat wi' the breezes that swung
Away, on the wave, like a bird of the main,
An' aye as it lessen'd, she sigh'd an' she sung,
Fareweel to the lad I shall ne'er see again!
Fareweel to my hero, the gallant an' young,
Fareweel to the lad I shall ne'er see again!

The muircock that craws on the brows of Ben-Connal,
He kens of his bed in a sweet mossy hame;
The eagle that soars o'er the cliffs of Clan-Ronald,
Unawed and unhunted, his eyry can claim;
The solan can sleep on the shelve of the shore,
The cormorant roost on his rock of the sea,
But ah! there is one whose hard fate I deplore,
Nor house, ha', nor hame, in this country has he—
The conflict is past, and our name is no more—
There's nought left but sorrow for Scotland and me!

The target is torn from the arm of the just,
The helmet is cleft on the brow of the brave,
The claymore for ever in darkness must rust,
But red is the sword of the stranger and slave;
The hoof of the horse, and the foot of the proud,
Have trod o'er the plumes on the bonnet of blue:
Why slept the red bolt in the breast of the cloud
When tyranny revell'd in blood of the true?
Fareweel, my young hero, the gallant and good;
The crown of thy fathers is torn from thy brow!

Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Cam ye by Athol, lad wi' the philabeg,
Down by the Tummel, or banks o' the Garry;
Saw ye our lads, wi' their bonnets and white cockades,
Leaving their mountains to follow Prince Charlie?
Follow thee! follow thee! wha wadna follow thee?
Lang hast thou loved and trusted us fairly:
Charlie, Charlie, wha wadna follow thee,
King o' the Highland hearts, bonny Prince Charlie!

I hae but ae son, my gallant young Donald;
But if I had ten, they should follow Glengary.
Health to M'Donnel, and gallant Clan-Ronald,
For these are the men that will die for their Charlie!
Follow thee! follow thee! &c.

I'll to Lochiel and Appin, and kneel to them,
Down by Lord Murray, and Roy of Kildarlie;
Brave M'Intosh he shall fly to the field with them;
These are the lads I can trust wi' my Charlie!
Follow thee! follow thee! &c.

Down through the Lowlands, down wi' the Whigamore!
Loyal true Highlanders, down wi' them rarely!
Ronald and Donald, drive on wi' the broad claymore,
Over the necks of the foes of Prince Charlie!
Follow thee! follow thee! wha wadna follow thee?
Lang hast thou loved and trusted us fairly:
Charlie, Charlie, wha wadna follow thee,
King o' the Highland hearts, bonny Prince Charlie?

The Skylark.

Bird of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh to abide in the desert with thee!
Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!

Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh to abide in the desert with thee!

Gang to the Brakens wi' me.

I'll sing of yon glen of red heather,
An' a dear thing that ca's it her hame,
Wha's a' made o' love-life thegither,
Frae the tie o' the shoe to the kaime.
Love beckons in every sweet motion,
Commanding due homage to gie;
But the shrine o' my dearest devotion
Is the bend o' her bonnie e'e-bree.

I fleech'd an' I pray'd the dear lassie
To gang to the brakens wi' me;
But, though neither lordly nor saucy,
Her answer was—"Laith wad I be!
I neither hae father nor mither
Sage counsel or caution to gie;
An' prudence has whisper'd me never
To gang to the brakens wi' thee."

Dear lassie, how can ye upbraid me,
An' try your ain love to beguile?
For ye are the richest young lady
That ever gaed o'er the kirk-stile.
Your smile, that is blither than ony,
The bend o' your cheerfu' e'e-bree,
An' the sweet blinks o' love there sae bonnie,
Are five hunder thousand to me!

She turn'd her around, an' said, smiling,
While the tear in her blue eye shone clear,
"You're welcome, kind sir, to your mailing,
For, oh, you hae valued it dear:
Gae make out the lease, do not linger,
Let the parson indorse the decree;
An' then, for a wave o' your finger,
I'll gang to the brakens wi' thee!"

There's joy in the bright blooming feature,
When love lurks in every young line;
There's joy in the beauties of nature,
There's joy in the dance and the wine:
But there's a delight will ne'er perish,
'Mang pleasures all fleeting an' vain,
And that is to love and to cherish
The fond little heart that's our ain!

The Minstrel Boy.

The minstrel boy to the glen is gone,
In its deepest dells you'll find him,
Where echoes sing to his music's tone,
And fairies listen behind him.
He sings of nature all in her prime,
Of sweets that around him hover,
Of mountain heath and moorland thyme,
And trifles that tell the lover.

How wildly sweet is the minstrel's lay,
Through cliffs and wild woods ringing!
For ah, there is love to beacon his way,
And hope in the song he's singing!
The bard may indite, and the minstrel sing,
And maidens may chorus it rarely;
But unless there be love in the heart within,
The ditty will charm but sparely.

Farewell to Glen-Shalloch.

Farewell to Glen-Shalloch,
A farewell for ever;
Farewell to my wee cot
That stands by the river!
The fall is loud sounding
In voices that vary,
And the echoes surrounding
Lament with my Mary.

I saw her last night,
'Mid the rocks that inclose them,
With a child at her knee,
And a child at her bosom:
I heard her sweet voice
'Mid the depth of my slumber,
And the sang that she sung
Was of sorrow and cumber.

"Sleep sound, my sweet babe!
There is nought to alarm thee;
The sons of the valley
No power have to harm thee.

I'll sing thee to rest
In the balloch untrodden,
With a coronach sad
For the slain of Culloden.

"The brave were betray'd,
And the tyrant is daring
To trample and waste us,
Unpitying, unsparing.
Thy mother no voice has,
No feeling that changes,
No word, sign, or song,
But the lesson of vengeance!

"I'll tell thee, my son,
How our laurels are withering;
I'll bind on thy sword
When the clansmen are gathering;
I'll bid thee go forth
In the cause of true honour,
And never return
Till thy country hath won her!

"Our tower of devotion
Is the house of the reaver;
The pride of the ocean
Is fallen for ever;
The pride of the forest,
That time could not weaken,
Is trod in the dust,
And its honours are shaken.

"Rise, spirits of yore,
Ever dauntless in danger!
For the land that was yours
Is the land of the stranger.
Oh come from your caverns,
All bloodless and hoary,
And these fiends of the valley
Shall tremble before ye!"

The Laird o' Lamington.

Can I bear to part wi' thee,
Never mair your face to see!
Can I bear to part wi' thee,
Drunken Laird o' Lamington!
Canty war ye o'er your kale,
Toddy jugs, an' caups o' ale,
Heart aye kind, an' leal, an' hale.
Honest Laird o' Lamington.

He that swears is but so so,
He that lies to hell must go,
He that falls in bagnio,
Falls in the devil's frying-pan.
Wha wa'st ne'er pat aith to word!
Never lied for duke nor lord?
Never sat at sinfu' board?
The honest Laird o' Lamington.

He that cheats can ne'er be just;
He that prays is ne'er to trust;
He that drinks to drauck his dust,
Wha can say that wrang is done?
Wha was't ne'er to fraud inclin'd?
Never pray'd sin' he can mind?
Ane wha's drouth there's few can find!
The honest Laird o' Lamington.

I like a man to tak' his glass,
Toast a friend or bonnie lass;
He that winna is an ass—
Deil send him ane to gallop on!
I like a man that's frank an' kind,
Meets me when I have a mind,
Sings his sang, an' drinks me blind,
Like the Laird o' Lamington.

The Souters o' Selkirk.

Up wi' the souters o' Selkirk,
The sons of an auld pedigree!
An' up wi' the lads o' the forest,
Renown'd for their leal loyaltie!
I may be mista'en, but I carena,
My error I never shall rue;
Of all manly virtues, I value
The heart that is loyal and true.
Sing umptidy-tumptidy tearhim, &c.

Let them brag o' their factious republics,
Of brawling an' plebeian birth;
The land that has got a good sovereign,
Has got the best blessing on earth.
Then up wi' our auld-fashion'd structure,
An' Willie the tap o' the tree!
An' up wi' the souters o' Selkirk!
The sons o' auld heroes for me!
Sing umptidy-tumptidy tearhim,
Sing umptidy-tumptidy tee;
Then up wi' the souters o' Selkirk,
The sons o' auld heroes for me!

O, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!

AIR—"*Over the Border.*"

Oh, my lassie, our joy to complete again,
Meet me again i' the gloaming, my dearie;
Low down in the dell let us meet again—
Oh, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!
Come, when the wee bat flits silent and eiry,
Come, when the pale face o' Nature looks weary;
Love be thy sure defence,
Beauty and innocence—
Oh, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!

Sweetly blows the haw an' the rowan-tree,
Wild roses speek our thicket sae briery;
Still, still will our walk in the greenwood be—
Oh, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!

List when the blackbird o' singing grows weary,
List when the beetle-bee's bugle comes near ye,
Then come with fairy haste,
Light foot, an' beating breast—
Oh, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!

Far, far will the bogle an' brownie be,
Beauty an' truth they darena come near it:
Kind love is the tie of our unity,
A' maun love it, an' a' maun revere it.
'Tis love makes the sang o' the woodland sae cheery,
Love gars a' nature look bonnie that's near ye;
That makes the rose sae sweet,
Cowslip and violet—
Oh, Jeanie, there's naething to fear ye!

Arabian Song.

Meet me at even, my own true love;
Meet me at even, my honey, my dove,
Where the moonbeam revealing
The cool fountain stealing
Away and away
Through flow'rets so gay,
Singing its silver roundelay.

Love is the fountain of life and bliss.
Love is the valley of joyfulness;
A garden of roses,
Where rapture reposes:
A temple of light,
All heavenly bright—
Oh, virtuous love is the soul's delight!

The Village of Balmaquhapple.

AIR—"*The Soger Laddie.*"

D'ye ken the big village of Balmaquhapple,
The great muckle village of Balmaquhapple?
'Tis steep'd in iniquity up to the thrapple,
An' what's to become o' poor Balmaquhapple?
Fling a' aff your bannets, an' kneel for your life, fo'ks,
And pray to St. Andrew, the god o' the Fife fo'ks;
Gar a' the hills yout wi' sheer vociferation,
And thus you may cry on sic needfu' occasion:

"O blessed St. Andrew, if e'er ye could pity fo'k,
Men fo'k or women fo'k, country or city fo'k,
Come for this ainee wi' the auld thief to grapple,
An' save the great village of Balmaquhapple
Frae drinking an' leeing, an' flyting an' swearing,
An' sins that ye wad be affrontit at hearing,
An' cheating an' stealing; oh, grant them redemption,
All save an' except the few after to mention:

"There's Johnny the elder, wha hopes ne'er to need ye,
Sae pawkie, sae holy, sae gruff, an' sae greedy;
Wha prays every hour as the wayfarer passes,
But aye at a hole where he watches the lasses:
He's cheated a thousand, an' e'en to this day yet
Can cheat a young lass, or they're leears that say it;
Then gie him his gate; he's sae slee an' sae civil,
Perhaps in the end he may wheedle the devil.

"There's Cappie the cobbler, an' Tammie the tinman,
An' Dickie the brewer, an' Peter the skinman,
An' Geordie our deacon for want of a better,
An' Bess, wha delights in the sins that beset her.
O worthy St. Andrew, we canna compel ye,
But ye ken as weel as a body can tell ye,
If these gang to heaven, we'll a' be sae shockit,
Your garret o' blue will but thinly be stockit.

"But for a' the rest, for the women's sake, save them,
Their bodies at least, an' their sauls, if they have them:
But it puzzles Jock Lesly, an' sma' it avails,
If they dwell in their stamocks, their heads, or their tails.
An' save, without word of confession auricular,
The clerk's bonny daughters, an' Bell in particular;
For ye ken that their beauty's the pride an' the staple
Of the great wicked village of Balmaquhapple!"

Callum-a-Glen.

Was ever old warrior of suffering so weary?
Was ever the wild beast so bay'd in his den?
The southern bloodhounds lie in kennel so near me.
That death would be freedom to Callum-a-Glen.
My sons are all slain, and my daughters have left me.
No child to protect me where once there were ten;
My chief they have slain, and of stay have bereft me.
And woe to the gray hairs of Callum-a-Glen!

The homes of my kinsmen are blazing to heaven.
The bright steep of morning has blush'd at the view;
The moon has stood still on the verge of the even.
To wipe from her pale cheek the tint of the dew;
For the dew it lies red on the vales of Lochaber.
It sprinkles the cot, and it flows in the pen;
The pride of my country is fallen for ever—
Death, hast thou no shaft for old Callum-a-Glen?

The sun in his glory has look'd on our sorrow.
The stars have wept blood over hamlet and lea:
Oh! is there no day-spring for Scotland—no morrow
Of bright renovation for souls of the free?
Yes, One above all hath beheld our devotion,
Our valour and faith are not hid from his ken;
The day is abiding of stern retribution
On all the proud foes of old Callum-a-Glen.

When the Rye comes Bame.

In the title and chorus of this favourite pastoral song, I choose rather to violate a rule in grammar, than a Scottish phrase so common, that when it is altered into the proper

way, every shepherd and shepherd's sweetheart account it nonsense. I was once singing it at a wedding with great glee the latter way ("when the kye come hame"), when a tailor, scratching his head, said, "It was a terrible affected way that!" I stood corrected, and have never sung it so again.

AIR—"*Shame fa' the gear an' the blathrie o't.*"

Come all ye jolly shepherds
That whistle through the glen,
I'll tell ye of a secret
That courtiers dinna ken:
What is the greatest bliss
That the tongue o' man can name?
'Tis to woo a bonny lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame,
'Tween the gloaming and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame.

'Tis not beneath the coronet,
Nor canopy of state,
'Tis not on couch of velvet,
Nor arbour of the great—
'Tis beneath the spreading birk,
In the glen without the name,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame, &c.

There the blackbird bigs his nest
For the mate he lo'es to see,
And on the topmost bough,
Oh, a happy bird is he;
Where he pours his melting ditty,
And love is a' the theme,
And he'll woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame, &c.

When the blewart bears a pearl,
And the daisy turns a pea,
And the bonnie lucken gowan
Has fauldit up her e'e,
Then the laverock frae the blue lift
Drops down, an' thinks nae shame
To woo his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame,

See yonder pawkie shepherd,
That lingers on the hill,
His ewes are in the fauld,
An' his lambs are lying still;
Yet he downa gang to bed,
For his heart is in a flame
To meet his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame.
When the kye comes hame, &c.

When the little wee bit heart
Rises high in the breast,
An' the little wee bit starn
Rises red in the east,
Oh there's a joy sae dear,
That the heart can hardly frame,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie,
When the kye comes hame!
When the kye comes hame, &c.

Then since all nature joins
In this love without alloy,
Oh, wha wad prove a traitor
To Nature's dearest joy?
Or wha wad choose a crown,
Wi' its perils and its fame,
And *miss* his bonnie lassie
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame,
When the kye comes hame,
'Tween the gloaming and the mirk,
When the kye comes hame![1]

Lenachan's Farewell.

Alexander Stuart of Lenachan was a man of gigantic strength, and an officer of the regiment of Appin. He was obliged to make his escape to America, several years subsequent to the *forty-five*, to elude the vengeance of the Campbells.

Fare thee weel, my native cot,
Bothy o' the birken-tree!
Sair the heart an' hard the lot
O' the man that parts wi' thee!
My good grandsire's hand thee rear'd—
Then thy wicker-work was full;
Many a Campbell's glen he clear'd,
Hit the buck, an' hough'd the bull.

In thy green and grassy crook
Mair lies hid than crusted stanes;
In thy bein and weirdly nook
Lie some stout Clan-Gillan banes.

[1] The Shepherd afterwards gave the following version of this very beautiful song:

Come all ye jolly shepherds that whistle through the glen,
I'll tell ye of a secret that courtiers dinna ken:
What is the greatest bliss that the tongue o' man can name?
'Tis to woo a bonnie lassie when the kye come hame.

CHORUS.

When the kye come hame, when the kye come hame,
'Tween the gloamin and the mirk, when the kye come hame.

'Tis not beneath the burgonet, nor yet beneath the crown,
'Tis not on couch of velvet nor yet in bed of down—
'Tis beneath the spreading birch, in the dell without a name,
Wi' a bonnie, bonnie lassie, when the kye come hame.

Then the eye shines so bright, the hale soul to beguile,
There's love in every whisper, and joy in every smile:
Oh, wha wad choose a crown, wi' its perils and its fame,
And miss a bonnie lassie when the kye come hame?

See yonder pawkie shepherd, that lingers on the hill,
His ewes are in the fauld, and his lambs are lying still;
Yet he downa gang to bed, for his heart is in a flame
To meet his bonnie lassie, when the kye come hame.

Awa' wi' fame and fortune—what comfort can they gi'e?—
And a' the arts that prey upon man's life and liberty:
Gi'e me the highest joy that the heart o' man can frame—
My bonnie, bonnie lassie, when the kye come hame!

Thou wert aye the kinsman's hame—
Routh and welcome was his fare;
But if serf or Saxon came,
He cross'd Murich's hirst nae mair.

Never hand in thee yet bred
Kendna how the sword to wield;
Never heart of thine had dread
Of the foray or the field:
Ne'er on straw, mat, bulk, or bed,
Son of thine lay down to dee;
Every lad within thee bred
Died beneath heaven's open e'e.

Charlie Stuart he came here,
For our king as right became;
Wha could shun the Bruce's heir,
Or desert his royal name?
Firm to stand and free to fa',
Forth we march'd right valiantlie—
Gane is Scotland's king and law,
And woe to Appin and to me!

Freeman yet, I'll scorn to fret;
Here nae langer I maun stay,
But when I my hame forget,
May my heart forget to play!
Fare thee weel, my father's cot,
Bothy o' the birken tree!
Sair the heart, and hard the lot
O' the warrior leaving thee!

The Stuarts of Appin.

No national calamity has ever given me so much pain as the total bereavement of the brave clans who stood to the last for the cause of the house of Stuart. It is a stain on the annals of our legislature which can never be blotted out.

I sing of a land that was famous of yore,
The land of Green Appin, the ward of the flood,
Where every gray cairn that broods o'er the shore,
Marks grave of the royal, the valiant, or good:
The land where the strains of gray Ossian were framed—
The land of fair Selma, and reign of Fingal—
And late of a race, that with tears must be named,
The noble Clan Stuart, the bravest of all.
Oh-hon, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin!
The gallant, devoted, old Stuarts of Appin!
Their glory is o'er,
For the clan is no more,
And the Sassenach sings on the hills of green Appin.

In spite of the Campbells, their might and renown,
And all the proud files of Glenorchy and Lorn,
While one of the Stuarts held claim on the crown,
His banner full boldly by Appin was borne.
And ne'er fell the Campbells in cheek or trepan,
In all their Whig efforts their power to renew,
But still on the Stuarts of Appin they ran,
To wreak their proud wrath on the brave and the few.
Oh-hon, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin, &c.

In the year of the Graham, while in oceans of blood
The fields of the Campbells were gallantly flowing,
It was then that the Stuarts the foremost still stood,
And paid back a share of the debt they were owing.
O proud Inverlochy! O day of renown!
Since first the sun rose o'er the peaks of Cruachin.
Was ne'er such an host by such valour o'erthrown,
Was ne'er such a day for the Stuarts of Appin!
Oh-hon, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin, &c.

And ne'er for the crown of the Stuarts was fought
One battle on vale, or on mountain deer-trodden,
But dearly to Appin the glory was bought,
And dearest of all on the field of Culloden!
Lament, O Glen-Creran, Glen-Duror, Ardshiel,
High offspring of heroes, who conquer'd were never;
For the deeds of your fathers no bard shall reveal,
And the bold clan of Stuart must perish for ever!
Oh-hon, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin, &c.

Clan-Chattan is broken, the Seaforth bends low,
The sun of Clan-Ranald is sinking in labour:
Glencoe and Clan-Donnachie, where are they now?
And where is bold Keppoch, the lord of Lochaber?
All gone with the house they supported!—laid low,
While dogs of the south their bold life-blood were lapping,
Trod down by a proud and a merciless foe—
The brave are all gone with the Stuarts of Appin!
Oh-on, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin, &c.

They are gone, they are gone, the redoubted, the brave!
The sea-breezes lone o'er their relics are sighing:
Dark weeds of oblivion shroud many a grave
Where the unconquered foes of the Campbell are lying.
But long as the gray hairs wave over this brow,
And earthly emotions my spirit are wrapping,
My old heart with tides of regret shall o'erflow,
And bleed for the fall of the Stuarts of Appin!
Oh-hon, an Righ! and the Stuarts of Appin!
The gallant, devoted, old Stuarts of Appin!
Their glory is o'er,
For their star is no more,
And the green grass waves over the heroes of Appin!

The Poor Man.

Loose the yett, an' let me in,
Lady wi' the glistening e'e,
Dinna let your menial train
Drive an auld man out to dee.
Cauldrife is the winter even,
See the rime hangs at my chin;
Lady, for the sake of heaven,
Loose the yett, an' let me in!

Ye shall gain a virgin hue,
  Lady, for your courtesye,
Ever beaming, ever new,
  Aye to bloom an' ne'er to dee.
Lady, there's a lovely plain
  Lies beyond yon setting sun,
There we soon may meet again—
  Short the race we hae to run.

'Tis a land of love an' light;
  Rank or title is not there;
High an' low maun there unite,
  Poor man, prince, an' lady fair.
There, what thou on earth hast given,
  Doubly shall be paid again:
Lady, for the sake of heaven,
  Loose the yett, an' let me in!

Blessings rest upon thy head,
  Lady of this lordly ha'!
That bright tear that thou didst shed
  Fell nae down amang the snaw!
It is gane to heaven aboon,
  To the fount of charity;
When thy days on earth are done,
  That blest drop shall plead for thee.

The Women Fo'k.

Oh sairly may I rue the day
  I fancied first the womankind;
For aye sinsyne I ne'er can hae
  Ae quiet thought or peace o' mind!
They hae plagued my heart an' pleased my e'e,
  An' teased an' flatter'd me at will,
But aye for a' their witchery,
  The pawky things I lo'e them still.
    Oh the women fo'k! Oh, the women fo'k!
      But they hae been the wreck o' me;
    Oh weary fa' the women fo'k,
      For they winna let a body be!

I hae thought an' thought, but darena tell,
  I've studied them wi' a' my skill,
I've lo'ed them better than mysell,
  I've tried again to like them ill.
Wha sairest strives, will sairest rue,
  To comprehend what nae man can;
When he has done what man can do,
  He'll end at last where he began.
    Oh, the women fo'k, &c.

That they hae gentle forms and meet,
  A man wi' half a look may see;
An' gracefu' airs, and faces sweet,
  An' waving curls aboon the bree;
An' smiles as soft as the young rose-bud;
  An' een sae pawky, bright, an' rare,
Wad lure the laverock frae the cludd—
  But, laddie, seek to ken nae mair!
    Oh, the women fo'k, &c.

Even but this night nae farther gane,
  The date is neither lost nor lang;
I tak ye witness ilka ane,
  How fell they fought an' fairly dang.
Their point they've carried right or wrang,
  Without a reason, rhyme, or law,
An' forced a man to sing a sang,
  That ne'er could sing a verse ava.
    Oh the women fo'k! Oh the women fo'k!
      But they hae been the wreck o' me;
    Oh weary fa' the women fo'k,
      For they winna let a body be!

M'Lean's Welcome.

Come o'er the stream, Charlie,
Dear Charlie, brave Charlie;
Come o'er the stream, Charlie,
  And dine with M'Lean;
And though you be weary,
We'll make your heart cheery,
And welcome our Charlie,
  And his loyal train.
We'll bring down the track deer,
We'll bring down the black steer,
The lamb from the bracken,
  And doe from the glen;
The salt sea we'll harry,
And bring to our Charlie
The cream from the bothy,
  And curd from the pen.

Come o'er the stream, Charlie,
Dear Charlie, brave Charlie;
Come o'er the sea, Charlie,
  And dine with M'Lean;
And you shall drink freely
The dews of Glen-sheerly,
That stream in the starlight
  When kings do not ken.
And deep be your meed
Of the wine that is red,
To drink to your sire,
  And his friend the M'Lean.

Come o'er the stream, Charlie,
Dear Charlie, brave Charlie;
Come o'er the stream, Charlie,
  And dine with M'Lean;
If aught will invite you,
Or more will delight you,
'Tis ready, a troop of our bold Highlandmen,
  All ranged on the heather,
  With bonnet and feather,
  Strong arms and broad claymores,
    Three hundred and ten!

The Maid of the Sea.

Come from the sea,
Maiden to me,
Maiden of mystery, love, and pain!
Wake from thy sleep,
Low in the deep;
Over thy green waves sport again!
Come to this sequester'd spot, love,
Death's where thou art, as where thou art not, love;
Then come unto me,
Maid of the Sea,
Rise from the wild and stormy main;
Wake from thy sleep,
Calm in the deep,
Over thy green waves sport again!

Is not the wave
Made for the slave,
Tyrant's chains, and stern control;
Land for the free
Spirit like thee,
Thing of delight to a minstrel's soul?
Come, with thy song of love and of sadness,
Beauty of face and rapture of madness;
Oh, come unto me,
Maid of the Sea,
Rise from the wild and surging main;
Wake from thy sleep,
Calm in the deep,
Over thy green waves sport again!

Go Home to your Rest.

AIR—"*The Dandy, O.*"

Go home, go home to your rest, young man,
The sky looks cold in the west, young man;
For should we rove
Through Morna's grove,
A noontide walk is the best, young man.
Go sleep, the heavens look pale, young man,
And sighs are heard in the gale, young man:
A walk in the night,
By the dim moonlight,
A maiden might chance to bewail, young man!

When all the world's awake, young man,
A proffer of love I may take, young man;
But the star of truth,
The guide of my youth,
Never pointed to midnight wake, young man.
Go sleep till rise of the sun, young man,
The sage's eye to shun, young man;
For he's watching the flight
Of demons to-night,
And may happen to take thee for one, young man.

The Harp of Ossian.

I have been sorely blamed by some friends for a sentiment expressed in this song; but I have always felt it painfully that the name of SCOTLAND, the superior nation in everything but wealth, should be lost, not in Britain, for that is proper, but in England. In all despatches we are denominated *the English*, forsooth! We know ourselves, however, that we are not English, nor never intend to be.

Old harp of the Highlands, how long hast thou
slumber'd
In cave of the correi, ungarnish'd, unstrung!
Thy minstrels no more with thy heroes are number'd,
Or deeds of thy heroes no more dare be sung.
A seer late heard, from thy cavern ascending,
A low sounding chime, as of sorrow and dole;
Some spirit unseen on the relic attending,
Thus sung the last strain of the warrior's soul:

"My country, farewell! for the days are expired
On which I could hallow the deeds of the free;
Thy heroes have all to new honours aspired,
They fight, but they fight not for Scotia nor me.
All lost is our sway, and the name of our nation
Is sunk in the name of our old mortal foe;
Then why should the lay of our last degradation
Be forced from the harp of old Ossian to flow!

"My country, farewell! for the murmurs of sorrow
Alone the dark mountains of Scotia become;
Her sons condescend from new models to borrow,
And voices of strangers prevail in the hum.
Before the smooth face of our Saxon invaders,
Is quench'd the last ray in the eye of the free;
Then, oh! let me rest in the caves of my fathers,
Forgetful of them as forgetful of thee!"

When Maggy Gangs Away.

Oh, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?
Oh, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away!
There's no a heart in a' the glen
That disna dread the day:
Oh, what will a' the lads do
When Maggy gangs away!

Young Jock has ta'en the hill for't—
A waefu' wight is he;
Poor Harry's ta'en the bed for't,
An' laid him down to dee;
An' Sandy's gane unto the kirk,
An' learnin' fast to pray:
And oh, what will the lads do
When Maggy gangs away!

The young laird o' the Lang-Shaw
Has drunk her health in wine;
The priest has said—in confidence—
The lassie was divine,

And that is mair in maiden's praise
Than ony priest should say:
But oh, what will the lads do
When Maggy gangs away?

The wailing in our green glen
That day will quaver high;
'Twill draw the redbreast frae the wood,
The laverock frae the sky;
The fairies frae their beds o' dew
Will rise an' join the lay:
An' hey! what a day will be
When Maggy gangs away!

A Father's Lament.

How can you bid this heart be blithe,
When blithe this heart can never be?
I've lost the jewel from my crown—
Look round our circle, and you'll see
That there is ane out o' the ring
Who never can forgotten be—
Ay, there's a blank at my right hand,
That ne'er can be made up to me!

'Tis said, as water wears the rock,
That time wears out the deepest line;
It may be true wi' hearts enow,
But never can apply to mine.
For I have learn'd to know and feel—
Though losses should forgotten be—
That still the blank at my right hand
Can never be made up to me!

I blame not Providence's sway,
For I have many joys beside,
And fain would I in grateful way
Enjoy the same, whate'er betide.
A mortal thing should ne'er repine,
But stoop to the supreme decree;
Yet, oh! the blank at my right hand
Can never be made up to me!

There's Gowd in the Breast.

AIR.—"*The Red Fox.*"

There's gowd in the breast of the primrose pale,
An' siller in every blossom;
There's riches galore in the breeze of the vale,
And health in the wild wood's bosom.
Then come my love, at the hour of joy,
When warbling birds sing o'er us;
Sweet nature for us has no alloy,
And the world is all before us.

The courtier joys in bustle and power,
The soldier in war-steeds bounding,
The miser in hoards of treasured ore,
The proud in their pomp surrounding:
But we hae yon heaven, sae bonnie and blue,
And laverocks skimming out o'er us;
The breezes of health and the valleys of dew—
Oh, the world is all before us!

Why Weeps yon Highland Maid?

Why weeps yon Highland maid
Over the tartan plaid—
Is it a pledge of care,
Or are the blood-drops there?
Tell me, thou hind of humble seeming,
Why the tears on her cheek are gleaming?
Why should the young and fair
Thus weep unpitied there?

Stranger, that Highland plaid
Low in the dust was laid;
He who the relic wore,
He is, alas! no more:
He and his loyal clan were trodden
Down by slaves on dark Culloden.
Well o'er a lover's pall,
Well may the tear-drops fall!

Where now her clansman true?
Where is the bonnet blue?
Where the claymore that broke
Fearless through fire and smoke?
Not one gleam by glen or river;
It lies dropp'd from the hand for ever.
Stranger, our fate deplore,
Our ancient name's no more!

My Emma, my Darling.

My Emma, my darling, from winter's domain
Let us fly to the glee of the city again,
Where a day never wakes but some joy it renews,
And a night never falls but that joy it pursues;
Where the dance is so light, and the hall is so bright,
And life whirls onward one round of delight.
Would we feel that we love and have spirits refined,
We must mix with the world, and enjoy humankind.

Mute nature is lovely in earth and in sky,
It cheers the lone heart and enlivens the eye;
But nowhere can beauty and dignity shine,
So as in the human race fair and divine.
'Mongst these could I love thee, and that love enjoy,
But, ah! in the wilderness fond love would cloy;
To the homes of our kindred our spirits must cling,
And away from their bosoms at last take their wing!

The Mermaid's Song.

Lie still, my love, lie still and sleep,
Long is thy night of sorrow;
Thy maiden of the mountain deep
Shall meet thee on the morrow.

But oh, when shall that morrow be,
When my true love shall waken;
When shall we meet, refined and free,
Amid the moorland braken?

Full low and lonely is thy bed,
The worm even flies thy pillow;
Where now the lips, so comely red,
That kiss'd me 'neath the willow?
Oh, I must smile, and weep the while,
Amid my song of mourning,
At freaks of man in life's short span,
To which there's no returning.

Lie still, my love, lie still and sleep,
Hope lingers o'er thy slumber:
What though thy years beneath the steep
Should all its flowers outnumber;
Though moons steal o'er, and seasons fly
On time-swift wing unstaying?
Yet there's a spirit in the sky,
That lives o'er thy decaying.

In domes beneath the water springs,
No end hath my sojourning;
And to this land of fading things
Far hence be my returning;
For all the spirits of the deep
Their long last leave are taking.
Lie still, my love, lie still and sleep,
Till the last morn is breaking.

Donald M'Gillabry.

Donald's gane up the hill hard an' hungry,
Donald's come down the hill wild an' angry;
Donald will clear the gouk's nest cleverly;
Here's to the king, an' Donald M'Gillavry!
Come like a weigh-bauk, Donald M'Gillavry,
Come like a weigh-bauk, Donald M'Gillavry;
Balance them fair, an' balance them cleverly,
Off wi' the counterfeit, Donald M'Gillavry!

Donald's come o'er the hill trailin' his tether, man,
As he war wud, or stang'd wi' an' ether, man;
When he gaes back, there's some will look merrily:
Here's to King James an' Donald M'Gillavry!
Come like a weaver, Donald M'Gillavry,
Come like a weaver, Donald M'Gillavry;
Pack on your back an elwand o' steelary,
Gie them full measure, my Donald M'Gillavry!

Donald has foughten wi' reif and roguery,
Donald has dinner'd wi' banes an' beggary;
Better it war for whigs an' whiggery
Meeting the deevil, than Donald M'Gillavry.
Come like a tailor, Donald M'Gillavry,
Come like a tailor, Donald M'Gillavry,
Push about, in an' ont, thimble them cleverly,
Here's to King James an' Donald M'Gillavry!

Donald's the callant that bruiks nae tangleness,
Whigging an' prigging an' a' newfangleness;
They maun be gane, he winna be baukit, man,
He maun hae justice, or rarely he'll tak it, man.
Come like a cobbler, Donald M'Gillavry,
Come like a cobbler, Donald M'Gillavry;
Bore them, an' yerk them, an' lingel them cleverly
Up wi' King James and Donald M'Gillavry!

Donald was mumpit wi' mirds and mockery,
Donald was blindit wi' bladds o' property;
Arles ran high, but makings war naething, man;
Gudeness! how Donald is flyting an' fretting, man!
Come like the deevil, Donald M'Gillavry,
Come like the deevil, Donald M'Gillavry;
Skelp them an' scadd them pruved sae unbritherly
Up wi' King James an' Donald M'Gillavry!

O'er the Ocean Bounding.

AIR.—"*Maid of the Valley.*"

O'er the ocean bounding,
Other lands surrounding,
Love, I will think of thee!
Though new skies me cover,
And other stars shine over,
Yet thou art still with me.
When at morn or even,
Low I kneel to heaven,
Be my sins forgiven
As my love shall be!
When my hopes are dearest,
And my soul sincerest,
Then I'll remember thee!

Thee, my soul's sole pleasure,
Thee, its dearest treasure,
Life, health, all to me.
All of land or ocean,
All a world's commotion,
Knits me the more to thee.
When new passions move me,
When I cease to love thee,
May the heavens above me,
Chasten my perfidy!
Even in woe and cumber,
Even in death's last slumber,
I will remember thee!

Charlie is my Darling.

'Twas on a Monday morning,
Right early in the year,
That Charlie came to our town,
The young Chevalier.

An' Charlie is my darling,
My darling, my darling,
Charlie is my darling,
The young Chevalier.

As Charlie he came up the gate,
His face shone like the day;
I grat to see the lad come back
That had been lang away.
An' Charlie is my darling, &c.

Then ilka bonnie lassie sang,
As to the door she ran,
Our king shall hae his ain again,
An' Charlie is the man:
For Charlie he's my darling, &c.

Outower yon moory mountain,
An' down the craigy glen,
Of naething else our lasses sing
But Charlie an' his men.
An' Charlie he's my darling, &c.

Our Highland hearts are true an' leal,
An' glow without a stain;
Our Highland swords are metal keen,
An' Charlie he's our ain.
An' Charlie he's my darling,
My darling, my darling;
Charlie he's my darling,
The young Chevalier.

If e'er I am thine.

AIR—"*The Winding Sheet.*"

If e'er I am thine, the birds of the air,
The beasts of the field, and fish of the sea,
Shall in our love and happiness share,
Within their elements fair and free,
And rejoice because I am thine, love.

We'll have no flowers, nor words of love,
Nor dreams of bliss that never can be;
Our trust shall be in Heaven above:
Our hope in a far futurity
Must arise, when I am made thine, love.

And this shall raise our thoughts more high
Than visions of vanity here below;
For chequer'd through life our path must lie—
Mid gleams of joy and shades of woe
We must journey, when I am thine, love.

Meg o' Marley.

Oh ken ye Meg o' Marley glen,
The bonnie blue-e'ed dearie?
She's play'd the deil amang the men,
An' a' the land's grown eery.
She's stown the "Bangor" frae the clerk,
An' snool'd him wi' the shame o't;
The minister's fa'n through the text,
An' Meg gets a' the blame o't.

The ploughman ploughs without the sock;
The gadman whistles sparely;
The shepherd pines amang his flock,
An' turns his e'en to Marley;
The tailor lad's fa'n ower the bed;
The cobbler ca's a parley;
The weaver's neb's out through the web,
An' a' for Meg o' Marley.

What's to be done, for our gudeman
Is flyting late an' early?
He rises but to curse an' ban,
An' sits down but to ferly.
But ne'er had love a brighter lowe,
Than light his torches sparely
At the bright e'en an' blithesome brow
O' bonnie Meg o' Marley.

The Ladies' Evening Song.

Oh the glass is no for you,
Bonnie laddie O!
The glass is no for you,
Bonnie laddie O!
The glass is no for you,
For it dyes your manly brow,
An' it fills you roarin' fu',
Bonnie laddie O.

Then drive us not away
Wi' your drinkin' O;
We like your presence mair
Than you're thinkin' o';
How happy will you be
In our blithesome companye,
Taking innocence and glee
For your drinking O!

Now your e'en are glancing bright,
Bonny laddie O,
Wi' a pure an' joyfu' light,
Bonnie laddie O:
But at ten o'clock at night,
Take a lady's word in plight,
We will see another sight,
Bonnie laddie O.

There's a right path an' a wrang,
Bonnie laddie O;
An' you needna argue lang,
Bonnie laddie O.
For the mair you taste an' see
O' our harmless companye,
Aye the happier you will be,
Bonnie laddie O!

Mary, canst thou leabe me?

Mary, canst thou leave me?
Is there nought will move thee?
Dearest maid, believe me,
I but live to love thee.
When we two are parted,
When the seas us sever,
Still this heart, deserted,
Clings to thee for ever.
Days so dull and dreary,
Nights so mirk and eerie,
Is there nought can cheer me?
Never! my love, never!

Connal, cease to borrow
Rueful words to chide me!
From this land of sorrow
Haste, oh, haste to hide thee!
Spirits round us hover,
Breathing death and plunder;
But when this is over,
Which we tremble under,
Then, dear youth, believe me,
Though this time I grieve thee,
Kindly I'll receive thee,
Never more to sunder!

Mary is my only Joy.

AIR—"*Is fallain gun dith thainig tha.*"

Mary is my only joy,
Mary is blithe and Mary is coy,
Mary's the gowd where there's nae alloy;
Though black—yet oh, she's bonnie:
Her breath is the birken bower o' spring,
Her lips the young rose opening,
And her hair is the hue of the raven's wing;
She's black, but oh, she's bonnie.

The star that gilds the evening sky,
Though bright its ray, may never vie
Wi' Mary's dark and liquid eye;
Though black, yet oh, she's bonnie.
In yon green wood there is a bower,
Where lies a bed of witching power;
Under that bed there blooms a flower,
That steals the heart unwary!

Oh, there is a charm, and there is a spell,
That, oh and alack! I know too well—
A pang that the tongue may hardly tell,
Though felt baith late and early.
The beauteous flower beneath the tree,
The spell of the wildest witchcrye,
The gowd and the gear, an' a' to me,
Is my black but my bonnie Mary!

O, weel befa' the Maiden gay.

Oh, weel befa' the maiden gay,
In cottage, bught, or penn,
An' weel befa' the bonnie May
That wons in yonder glen;
Wha loes the modest truth sae weel,
Wha's aye sae kind, an' aye sae leal,
An' pure as blooming asphodel
Among sae mony men.
Oh, weel befa' the bonnie thing
That wons in yonder glen!

'Tis sweet to hear the music float
Along the gloaming lea;
'Tis sweet to hear the blackbird's note
Come pealing frae the tree;
To see the lambkin's lightsome race—
The speckled kid in wanton chase—
The young deer cower in lonely place,
Deep in her flowery den;
But sweeter far the bonnie face
That smiles in yonder glen!

Oh, had it no' been for the blush
O' maiden's virgin flame,
Dear beauty never had been known,
An' never had a name;
But aye sin' that dear thing o' blame
Was modell'd by an angel's frame,
The power o' beauty reigns supreme
O'er a' the sons o' men;
But deadliest far the sacred flame
Burns in a lonely glen!

There's beauty in the violet's vest—
There's hinney in the haw—
There's dew within the rose's breast,
The sweetest o' them a'.
The sun will rise an' set again,
An' lace wi' burning gowd the main—
The rainbow bend outow'r the plain,
Sae lovely to the ken;
But lovelier far my bonnie thing
That wons in yonder glen!

Cameron's Welcome Hame.

This song was written to the Highland air bearing that name.

Oh strike your harp, my Mary,
Its loudest, liveliest key,
An' join the sounding corrci
In its wild melody;
For burn, an' breeze, an' billow,
Their sangs are a' the same,
And every waving willow
Soughs "Cameron's welcome hame."

Oh list yon thrush, my Mary,
That warbles on the pine,
His strain, sae light an' airy,
Accords in joy wi' thine;
The lark that soars to heaven,
The sea-bird on the faem,
Are singing, frae morn till even,
Brave "Cameron's welcome hame."

D'ye mind, my ain dear Mary,
When we hid in the tree,
An' saw our Auchnacarry
All flaming fearfully?
The fire was red, red glaring,
An' ruefu' was the scene,
An' aye you cried, despairing,
My father's ha's are gane!

I said, my ain dear Mary,
D'ye see yon cloud sae dun,
That sails aboon the carry,
An' hides the weary sun?
Behind yon curtain dreary,
Beyond, and far within,
There's Ane, my dear wee Mary,
Wha views this deadly sin.

He sees this wacfu' reaving,
The rage o' dastard knave,
He saw our deeds of bravery,
And He'll reward the brave.
Though all we had was given
For loyalty an' faith,
I still had hopes that Heaven
Would right the hero's skaith.

The day is dawn'd in heaven
For which we a' thought lang;
The good, the just, is given
To right our nation's wrang.
My ain dear Auchnacarry,
I hae thought lang for thee;
Oh sing to your harp, my Mary,
An' sound its bonniest key!

Ye Breezes that spring.

Ye breezes that spring in some land unknown,
Or sleep on your clouds of the cider down,
Come over the mountain and over the dale,
More sweet than Arabia's spicy gale!
Come over the heath-flower's purple bloom,
And gather the birk's and the thyme's perfume,
For these are the sweets that bring no alloy
To dark Caledonia's mountain joy.

But oh thou breeze of the valley and hill!
Thou canst bring a richer offering still:
The kindly wish from the hall and the cot,
And the poor man's blessing that's never forgot,
The shepherd's proud boast over every degree,
And the song of the maiden the dearest to me:
Come laden with these, thou breeze of the hill!
And the lay of the Minstrel shall hail thee still.

Come rowe the Boat

Was written to a boat-song that I heard in the Highlands, sung by the rowers. It is a short cross measure—one of those to which it is impossible to compose good or flowing verses, but when sung, is very sweet.

Come rowe the boat, rowe the boat,
Ply to the pibroch's note,
Steer for yon lonely cot
O'er the wild main;
For there waits my dearie,
Both lonesome and eery,
And sorely she'll weary
To hear our bold strain.

Then rowe for her lover,
And play, boys, to move her;
The tide-stream is over,
And mild blows the gale.
I see her a-roaming
Like swan in the gloaming,
Or angel a-coming
Her Ronald to hail!

The deer of Ben-Aitley
Is comely and stately,
As tall and sedately
She looks o'er the dale;
The sea-bird rides sprightly
O'er billows so lightly,
Or boldly and brightly
Floats high on the gale.

But oh, my dear Mary,
What heart can compare thee
With aught in the valley,
The mountain, or tide?
All nature looks dreary
When thou art not near me,
But lovely and dearly
When thou'rt by my side.

The Highlander's Farewell.

Oh where shall I gae seek my bread,
Or where shall I gae wander?
Oh where shall I gae hide my head,
For here I'll bide nae langer?
The seas may rowe, the winds may blow,
And swathe me round in danger,
But Scotland I maun now forego,
And roam a lonely stranger.

The glen that was my father's own,
Maun be by his forsaken;
The house that was my father's home
Is levell'd with the braken.

Oh hon! oh hon! our glory's gone,
Stole by a ruthless reaver—
Our hands are on the broad claymore,
But the might is broke for ever!

And thou, my prince, my injured prince,
Thy people have disown'd thee—
Have hunted and have driven thee hence,
With ruined chiefs around thee.
Though hard beset, when I forget
Thy fate, young hapless rover,
This broken heart shall cease to beat,
And all its griefs be over.

Farewell, farewell, dear Caledon,
Land of the Gael no longer!
Strangers have trod thy glory on,
In guile and treachery stronger.
The brave and just sink in the dust,
On ruin's brink they quiver—
Heaven's pitying eye is closed on thee;
Adieu, adieu for ever!

How dear to me the Hour.

AIR—"*The Twisting of the Rope.*"

How dear to me the hour when daylight springs,
And sheds new glories on the opening view,
When westward far the towering mountain flings
His shadow, fringed with rainbows on the dew,
And the love-waken'd lark enraptured springs
To heaven's own gate, his carols to renew!

In every flowering shrub then life is new,
As opening on the sun its gladsome eye;
So is life's morning—blithely we pursue
Hope's gilded rainbow of the heavenly dye,
Till worn and weary we our travel rue,
And in life's cheerless gloaming yearn and die.

The Hill of Lochiel.

Long have I pined for thee,
Land of my infancy;
Now will I kneel on thee,
Hill of Lochiel!
Hill of the sturdy steer,
Hill of the roe and deer,
Hill of the streamlet clear,
I love thee well!

When in my youthful prime,
Correi or crag to climb,
Or tow'ring cliff sublime,
Was my delight;
Scaling the eagle's nest,
Wounding the raven's breast,
Skimming the mountain's crest,
Gladsome and light.

Then rose a bolder game—
Young Charlie Stuart came,
Cameron, that loyal name,
Foremost must be!
Hard then our warrior meed,
Glorious our warrior deed,
Till we were doom'd to bleed
By treachery.

Then did the red blood stream;
Then was the broadsword's gleam
Quench'd, in fair freedom's beam
No more to shine:
Then was the morning's brow,
Red with the fiery glow;
Fell hall and hamlet low,
All that were mine.

Far in a hostile land,
Stretch'd on a foreign strand,
Oft has the tear-drop bland
Scorch'd as it fell.
Once was I spurn'd from thee,
Long have I mourn'd for thee,
Now I'm return'd to thee,
Hill of Lochiel!

The Flowers of Scotland.

AIR—"*The Blue Bells of Scotland.*"

What are the flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel?
The lovely flowers of Scotland,
All others that excel?—
The thistle's purple bonnet,
And bonnie heather bell,
Oh they're the flowers of Scotland
All others that excel!

Though England eyes her roses,
With pride she'll ne'er forego,
The rose has oft been trodden
By foot of haughty foe;
But the thistle in her bonnet blue,
Still nods outow'r the fell;
And dares the proudest foeman
To tread the heather bell?

For the wee bit leaf o' Ireland,
Alack and well-a-day!
For ilka hand is free to pu'
An' steal the gem away:
But the thistle in her bonnet blue
Still bobs aboon them a';
At her the bravest darena blink,
Or gie his mou a thraw.

Up wi' the flowers o' Scotland,
The emblems o' the free!
Their guardians for a thousand years,
Their guardians still we'll be.

A foe had better brave the deil
Within his reeky cell,
Than our thistle's purple bonnet,
Or bonnie heather bell.

My Love's Bonnie.

My love's bonnie as bonnie can be,
My love's blithe as the bird on the tree;
But I like my bonnie lass, an' she loes me,
An' we'll meet by our bower in the morning.
Oh, how I will cling unto my love's side,
And I will kiss my bonnie, bonnie bride;
And I'll whisper a vow, whatever betide,
To my little flower in the morning.

Her breath is as sweet as the fragrant shower
Of dew that is blawn frae the rowan-tree flower;
Oh! never were the sweets of vernal bower,
Like my love's cheek in the morning.
Her eye is the blue-bell of the spring,
Her hair is the blackbird's bonnie wing;
To her dear side, oh! how I'll cling,
On our greenwood walk in the morning.

Sing on, sing on, my Bonnie Bird.

Sing on, sing on, my bonnie bird,
The sang ye sung yestreen, O,
When here, aneath the hawthorn wild
I met my bonnie Jean, O!
My blude ran prinklin' through my veins,
My hair begoud to steer, O;
My heart play'd deep against my breast,
When I beheld my dear, O!

O weel's me on my happy lot,
O weel's me o' my dearie,
O weel's me o' the charming spot
Where a' combined to cheer me!
The mavis liltit on the bush,
The lavcrock o'er the green, O,
The lily bloom'd, the daisy blush'd,
But a' war nought to Jean, O!

Sing on, sing on, my bonnie thrush,
Be nouther fley'd nor eerie;
I'll wad your love sits in the bush,
That gars ye sing sae cheerie.
She may be kind, she may be sweet,
She may be neat an' clean, O,
But oh, she's but a drysome mate
Compared wi' bonnie Jean, O!

If love wad open a' her stores,
An' a' her blooming treasures,
An' bid me rise, an' turn an' choose,
An' taste her chiefest pleasures.
My choice wad be the rosy cheek,
The modest beaming eye, O;
The auburn hair, the bosom fair,
The lips o' coral dye, O!

A bramble shade around our head,
A burnie popplin by, O;
Our bed the sward, our sheet the plaid,
Our canopy the sky, O!
An' here's the burn, an' there's the bush,
Around the flowery green, O;
An' this the plaid, an' sure the lass
Wad be my bonnie Jean, O!

Hear me, thou bonnie modest moon,
Ye sternies, twinklin' high, O,
An' a' ye gentle powers aboon,
That roam athwart the sky, O!
Ye see me gratefu' for the past,
Ye saw me blest yestreen, O,
An' ever till I breathe my last,
Ye'll see me true to Jean, O!

Love Letter.

Ah, Maggy, thou art gane away,
And left me here to languish;
To daunder on frae day to day,
Swathed in a sort o' angnish.
My mind's the aspen o' the vale,
In ceaseless waving motion;
'Tis like a ship without a sail,
On life's unstable ocean.

I downa bide to see the moon
Blink o'er the hill sae dearly,
Late on a bonnie face she shone,
A face that I loe dearly.
An' when down by the water clear
At e'en I'm lonely roaming,
I sigh, an' think if ane were here,
How sweet wad fa' the gloaming!

Ah, Maggy, thou art gane away,
An' I nae mair shall see thee;
Now a' the lee-lang simmer day,
An' a' the night I weary;
For thou wert aye sae sweet, sae gay,
Sae teazing an' sae canty,
I dinna blush to swear an' say,
In faith I canna want thee!

Oh, in the slippery paths o' love
Let prudence aye direct thee;
Let virtue every step approve,
And virtue will respect thee.
To ilka pleasure, ilka pang,
Alack! I am nae stranger,
An' he wha ainee has wander'd wrang,
Is best aware of danger.

May still thy heart be kind an' true,
A' ither maids excelling,
An' heaven shall shed its purest dew
Around thy rural dwelling.
May flow'rets spring, an' wild birds sing
Around thee late an' early,
An' oft to thy remembrance bring
The lad that loes thee dearly!

Mischievous Woman.

Could this ill warld hae been contrived
To stand without mischievous woman,
How peacefu' bodies might hae lived,
Released frae a' the ills sae common!
But since it is the waefu' case,
That man maun hae this teazing crony;
Why sic a sweet bewitching face?
Oh, had she no been made sae bonnie!

I might hae roam'd wi' cheerfu' mind,
Nae sin or sorrow to betide me,
As careless as the wandering wind,
As happy as the lamb beside me;
I might hae screw'd my tunefu' pegs,
And caroll'd mountain airs fu' gaily,
Had we but wantit a' the Megs,
Wi' glossy een sae dark an' wily.

I saw the danger, fear'd the dart,
The smile, the air, an' a' sae taking,
Yet open laid my wareless heart,
An' gat the wound that keeps me waking.
My harp waves on the willow green,
O' wild witch-notes it has nae ony
Sin' e'er I saw that pawky quean,
Sae sweet, sae wicked, an' sae bonnie!

Fair was thy Blossom.

Fair was thy blossom, bonnie flower,
That open'd like the rose in May,
Though nursed beneath the chilly shower
Of fell regret for love's decay.
How oft above thy lowly bed,
When all in silence slumber'd low,
The fond and filial tear was shed,
Thou child of love, of shame, and woe!

Fair was thy blossom, bonnie flower,
Fair as the softest wreath of spring,
When late I saw thee seek the bower,
In peace thy morning hymn to sing.
Thy little foot across the lawn
Scarce from the primrose press'd the dew;
I thought the spirit of the dawn
Before me to the greenwood flew.

The fatal shaft was on the wing,
Thy spotless soul from guilt to sever;
A tear of pity wet the string,
That twang'd and seal'd thine eye for ever.
I saw thee late the emblem true
Of beauty, innocence, and truth,
Stand on the upmost verge in view,
'Twixt childhood and unstable youth.

But now I see thee stretch'd at rest—
To break that rest shall wake no morrow—
Pale as the grave-flower on thy breast,
Poor child of love, of shame, and sorrow!
May thy long sleep be sound and sweet,
Thy visions fraught with bliss to be!
And long the daisy, emblem meet,
Shall shed its earliest tear o'er thee.

Courting Song.

The day-beam's unco laith to part,
It lingers o'er yon summit low'ring,
While I stand here with beating heart,
Behind the brier and willow cow'ring.
The gloamin' stern keeks o'er the yoke,
An' strews wi' goud the streams sae glassy;
The raven sleeps aboon the rock,
An' I wait for my bonnie lassie.

Weel may I tent the siller dew,
That comes at eve sae saftly stealing;
The silken hue, the bonnie blue
O' nature's rich an' radiant ceiling;
The lily lea, the vernal tree,
The night-breeze o'er the broomwood creeping;
The fading day, the milky way,
The star-beam on the water sleeping.

For gin my lassie were but here,
The jewel of my earthly treasure,
I'll hear nought but her accents dear,
Whispered in love's delicious measure.
Although the bat, wi' velvet wing,
Wheels round our bower sae dark an' grassy,
Oh, I'll be happier than a king,
Placed by thy side, my bonnie lassie!

Nae art hast thou, nae pawky wile,
The rapid flow of love impelling;
But oh, the love that lights thy smile,
Wad lure an angel frae his dwelling!
There is a language in thy e'e,
A music in thy voice of feeling,
The mildest virgin modestye,
An' soul that dwells within revealing.

She comes with maiden's cautious art,
Her stealing steps to tears impel me,
For ah! the beatings of her heart
Come flichterin' on the breeze to tell me.
Flee, a' ye sorrows, on the wind,
Ye warldly cares, I'll lightly pass ye!
Nae thought shall waver through my mind,
But raptures wi' my bonnie lassie.

There's nae Laddie coming.

There's nae laddie coming for thee, my dear Jean,
There's nae laddie coming for thee, my dear Jean;
I hae watch'd thee at mid-day, at morn, an' at e'en,
An' there's nae laddie coming for thee, my dear Jean.
But be nae down-hearted though lovers gang by,
Thou'rt my only sister, thy brother am I;
An' aye in my wee house thou welcome shalt be,
An' while I hae saxpence, I'll share it wi' thee.

O Jeanie, dear Jeanie, when we twa were young,
I sat on your knee, to your bosom I clung;
You kiss'd me, an' clasp'd me, an' croon'd your bit sang,
An' bore me about when you hardly dought gang.
An' when I fell sick, wi' a red watery e'e,
You watch'd your wee brother, an' fear'd he wad dee;
I felt the cool hand and the kindly embrace,
An' the warm trickling tears drappin' aft on my face.

Sae wae was my kind heart to see my Jean weep,
I closed my sick e'e, though I wasna asleep;
And I'll never forget till the day that I dee,
The gratitude due, my dear Jeanie, to thee.
Then be nae down-hearted, for nae lad can feel
Sic true love as I do, or ken ye sae weel;
My heart it yearns o'er thee, and grieved wad I be
If aught were to part my dear Jeanie an' me.

Appie M'Gie.

O Love has done muckle in city an' glen,
In tears of the women, an' vows of the men;
But the sweet little rogue, wi' his visions o' bliss,
Has never done aught sae unhallow'd as this.
For what do ye think?—at a dance on the green,
Afore the dew fell through the gloamin' yestreen,
He has woundit the bosom, an' blindit the e'e,
Of the flower o' our valley, young Appie M'Gie.

Young Appie was sweet as the zephyr of even,
And blithe as the laverock that carols in heaven;
As bonnie as ever was bud o' the thorn,
Or rose that unfolds to the breath o' the morn.
Her form was the fairest o' nature's design,
And her soul was as pure as her face was divine:
Ah, Love! 'tis a shame that a model so true,
By thee should be melted and moulded anew.

The little pale flow'rets blush deep for thy blame;
The fringe o' the daisy is purple wi' shame;
The heath-breeze that kisses the cheeks o' the free,
Has a tint of the mellow soft-breathings of thee.
Of all the wild wasters of glee and of hue,
And eyes that have depths o' the ocean of blue,
Love, thou art the chief: and a shame upon thee,
For this deed thou hast done to young Appie M'Gie!

The Gathering of the Clans.

AIR—"*St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.*"

There's news come ower the Highlands yestreen,
Will soon gar bonnets an' broadswords keen,
An' philabegs short an' tartans green,
Shine over the shore in the morning.
He comes, he comes, our spirits to cheer,
To cherish the land he holds so dear,
To banish the reaver,
The base deceiver,
And raise the fame of the clans for ever;
Our prince's array
Is in Moidart bay;
Come raise the clamour
Of bagpipes' yamour,
And join our loved Prince in the morning.

Come, brave Lochiel, the honour be thine,
The first in loyal array to shine;
If bold Clan-Ranald and thee combine,
Then who dares remain in the morning?
Glengarry will stand with arm of steel,
And Keppoch is blood from head to heel;
The Whiggers o' Skye may gang to the deil,
When Connal and Donald,
And gallant Clan-Ranald,
Are all in array,
And hasting away
To welcome their Prince in the morning.

The Appin will come while coming is good;
The stern M'Intosh is of trusty blood;
M'Kenzie and Fraser
Will come at their leisure,
The Whiggers of Sutherland scorning:
The Athol men keen as fire from steel:
M'Pherson for Charlie will battle the deil;
The hardy Clan-Donnoch,
Is up in the Rannoch,
Unawed by the pride of haughty Argyle;
And lordly Drummond
Is belted, and coming
To join his loved Prince in the morning.

Come all that are true men, steel to the bane,
Come all that reflect on the days that are gane,
Come all that hae brecks and all that hae nane,
And all that are bred unto sorning—
Come Moidart and Moy, M'Gunn and M'Craw,
M'Dugalds, M'Donalds, M'Devils, an' a',
M'Duffs an' M'Dumpies,
M'Leods an' M'Lumpies,
With claymores gleaming,
And standards streaming,
Come swift as the roe,
For weel or for woe,
That Whigs in their error,
May quake for terror,
To see our array in the morning.

I hae naebody now.

I hae naebody now, I hae naebody now,
To meet me upon the green,
Wi' light locks waving o'er her brow,
An' joy in her deep blue een;
Wi' the raptured kiss an' the happy smile,
An' the dance o' the lightsome fay,
An' the wee bit tale o' news the while
That had happen'd when I was away.

I hae naebody now, I hae naebody now,
To clasp to my bosom at even,
O'er her calm sleep to breathe the vow,
An' pray for a blessing from heaven.
An' the wild embrace, an' the gleesome face,
In the morning that met my eye,
Where are they now, where are they now?
In the cauld, cauld grave they lie.

There's naebody kens, there's naebody kens,
An' oh may they never prove,
That sharpest degree o' agony
For the child o' their earthly love—
To see a flower in its vernal hour
By slow degrees decay,
Then calmly aneath the hand o' death
Breathe its sweet soul away!

O dinna break, my poor auld heart,
Nor at thy loss repine,
For the unseen hand that threw the dart
Was sent frae her Father and thine;
Yet I maun mourn, an' I *will* mourn,
Even till my latest day,
For though my darling can never return,
I can follow the sooner away.

The Forty-Second's welcome to Scotland.

AIR—"*The Highland Watch.*"

Old Scotia! wake thy mountain strain,
In all its wildest splendours,
And welcome back the lads again,
Your honour's dear defenders.
Be every harp and viol strung,
Till all the woodlands quaver;
Of many a band your bards have sung,
But never hail'd a braver.
Raise high the pibroch, Donald Bane,
We're all in key to cheer it;
And let it be a martial strain,
That warriors bold may hear it.

Ye lovely maids, pitch high your notes
As virgin voice can sound them;
Sing of your brave, your noble Scots,
For glory blazes round them.
Small is the remnant you will see,
Lamented be the others,
But such a stem of such a tree
Take to your arms like brothers.
Then raise the pibroch, Donald Bane,
Strike all the glen with wonder;
Let the chanter yell, and the drone-notes swell,
Till music speaks in thunder.

What storm can rend your mountain-rock!
What wave your headlands shiver?
Long have they stood the tempest's shock,
Thou know'st they will for ever.
Sooner your eye those cliffs shall view
Split by the wind and weather,
Than foeman's eye the bonnet blue
Behind the nodding feather.
Oh raise the pibroch, Donald Bane!
Our caps to the sky we'll send them:
Scotland, thy honours who can stain,
Thy laurels who dare rend them?

The Lass o' Carlisle.

I'll sing ye a wee bit sang,
A sang i' the auldeu style,
It is of a bonnie young lass
Wha lived in merry Carlisle.
An' O but this lass was bonnie,
An' O but this lass was braw,
An' she had gowd in her coffers,
An' that was best of a'.
Sing hey, hickerty dickerty,
Hickerty dickerty dear;
The lass that has gowd an' beauty
Has naething on earth to fear!

This lassie had plenty o' wooers,
As beauty an' wealth should hae;
This lassie she took her a man,
An' then she could get nae mae.
This lassie had plenty o' weans,
That keepit her hands astir;
And then she dee'd and was buried,
An' there was an end of her.
Sing hey, hickerty dickerty,
Hickerty dickerty dan,
The best thing in life is to make
The maist o't that we can!

My Love she's but a Lassie yet.

My love she's but a lassie yet,
A lightsome lovely lassie yet;
It scarce wad do,
To sit an' woo
Down by the stream sae glassy yet.

But there's a braw time coming yet,
When we may gang a-roaming yet;
An' hint wi' glee
O' joys to be,
When fa's the modest gloaming yet.

She's neither proud nor saucy yet,
She's neither plump nor gaucy yet;
But just a jinking,
Bonnie blinking,
Hilty-skilty lassie yet.
But oh, her artless smile's mair sweet
Than hinny or than marmalete!
An' right or wrang,
Ere it be lang,
I'll bring her to a parley yet.

I'm jealous o' what blesses her,
The very breeze that kisses her,
The flowery beds
On which she treads,
Though wae for ane that misses her.
Then oh to meet my lassie yet,
Up in yon glen sae grassy yet;
For all I see
Are nought to me,
Save her that's but a lassie yet!

The Moon.

Now fare-ye-weel, bonnie Lady Moon,
Wi' thy still look o' majestye;
For though ye hae a queenly face,
'Tis e'en a fearsome sight to see.
Your lip is like Ben-Lomond's base,
Your mouth a dark unmeasured dell;
Your e'ebrow like the Grampian range,
Fringed with the brier an' heather-bell.

Yet still thou bear'st a human face,
Of calm an' ghostly dignity;
Some emblem there I fain wad trace
Of Him that made baith you an' me.
But fare-ye-weel, bonnie Lady Moon,
There's neither stop nor stay for me;
But when this joyfu' life is done,
I'll take a jaunt an' visit thee.

The Witch o' Fife;

Hurray, hurray, the jade's away,
Like a rocket of air with her bandalet!
I'm up in the air on my bonnie gray mare,
But I see her yet, I see her yet.
I'll ring the skirts o' the gowden wain
Wi' curb an' bit, wi' curb an' bit:
An' catch the Bear by the frozen mane—
An' I see her yet, I see her yet.

Away, away, o'er mountain an' main,
To sing at the morning's rosy yett;
An' water my mare at its fountain clear—
But I see her yet, I see her yet.
Away, thou bonnie witch o' Fife,
On foam of the air to heave an' flit,
An' little reck thou of a poet's life,
For he sees thee yet, he sees thee yet!

Row on, Row on.

AIR—"*Tushilaw's Lines.*"

Row on, row on, thou cauldrife wave!
Weel may you fume, and growl, and grumble—
Weel may you to the tempest rave
And down your briny mountains tumble;
For mony a heart thou hast made cauld,
Of firmest friend and fondest lover,
Who lie in thy dark bosom pall'd,
The garish green wave rolling over.

Upon thy waste of waters wide,
Though ray'd in a' the dyes o' heaven,
I never turn my looks aside,
But my poor heart wi' grief is riven;
For then on ane that loe'd me weel
My heart will evermair be turning;
An' oh! 'tis grievous aye to feel
That nought remains for me but mourning.

For whether he's alive or dead;
In distant land for maiden sighing;
A captive into slavery led,
Or in thy beds of amber lying,
I cannot tell:—I only know
I loved him dearly, and forewarn'd him;
I gave him thee in pain and woe,
And thou hast never more return'd him.

Still thou rowest on with sullen roar—
A broken heart to thee is nothing;
Thou only lovest to lash the shore,
And jabber out thy thunder, frothing.
Thy still small voice send to this creek,
The wavy field of waters over;
Oh! Spirit of the Ocean, speak,
And tell me where thou hold'st my lover!

I hae lost my Love.

I hae lost my love, an' I dinna ken how,
I hae lost my love, an' I carena;
For laith will I be just to lie down an' dee,
And to sit down an' greet wad be bairnly.
But a screed o' ill-nature I canna weel help,
At having been guidit unfairly;
An' weel wad I like to gie women a skelp,
An' yerk their sweet haffits fu' yarely.

Oh! plague on the limmers, sae sly and demure,
As pawkie as deils wi' their smiling;
As fickle as winter, in sunshine and shower,
The hearts o' a' mankind beguiling;
As sour as December, as soothing as May:
To suit their ain ends, never doubt them;
Their ill faults I coudna tell ower in a day,
But their beauty's the warst thing about them.

Ay, that's what sets up the haill warld in a lowe;
Makes kingdoms to rise and expire;
Man's micht is nae mair than a flaughten o' tow,
Opposed to a bleeze o' reid fire.
'Twas women at first made creation to bend,
And of nature's prime lord made the fellow;
An' 'tis her that will bring this ill warld to an end,
An' that will be seen an' heard tell o'.

Allan Dhu.

I like to see you, Allan Dhu,
I like wi' you to meet,
But dinna say to me you loe,
For that wad gar me greet.
I like to see you smile on me
Amang our maidens a',
But, oh! ae vow o' love frae you
I cou'dna stand ava.

Ay, ye may smile, but dinna speak;
I ken what ye've to say;
Sae, either haud your tongue sae sleek,
Or look another way;
For, should it be of love to me,
In manner soft and bland,
I wadna ye my face should see
For a' Bredalbin's land.

O Allan Dhu, 'tis nought to you
Of love to gibe and jeer;
But little ken ye of the pang
A maiden's heart maun bear,
When a' on earth that she hauds dear,
The hope that makes her fain,
Comes plump at ainee—Oh, me! the thought
'Maist turns my heart to stane.

No, Allan, no—I winna let
You speak a word the night:
Gang hame, an' write a lang letter,
For weel ye can indite.
And be it love, or be it slight,
I then can hae my will;
I'll steal away, far out o' sight,
An' greet, an' greet my fill.

Love's Visit.

Love came to the door o' my heart ae night,
And he call'd wi' a whining din—
"Oh, open the door! for it is but thy part
To let an old erony come in."

"Thou sly little elf! I hae open'd to thee
Far aftener than I dare say;
An' dear hae the openings been to me,
Before I could wile you away."

"Fear not," quo' Love, "for my bow's in the rest,
And my arrows are ilk ane gane;
For you sent me to wound a lovely breast,
Which has proved o' the marble stane.
I am sair forspent, then let me come in
To the nook where I wont to lie,
For sae aft hae I been this door within,
That I downa think to gang by."

I open'd the door, though I ween'd it a sin,
To the sweet little whimpering fay;
But he raised sic a buzz the cove within,
That he fill'd me with wild dismay;
For first I felt sic a thrilling smart,
And then sic an ardent glow,
That I fear'd the chords o' my sanguine heart
War a' gaun to flee in a lowe.

"Gae away, gae away, thou wicked wean!"
I cried, wi' the tear in my e'e;
"Ay! sae ye may say!" quo' he, "but I ken
Ye'll be laith now to part wi' me."
And what do you think?—by day and by night,
For these ten lang years and twain,
I have cherish'd the urchin with fondest delight,
And we'll never mair part again.

A Widow's Wail.

Air—"*Gilderoy.*"

Oh thou art lovely yet, my boy,
Even in thy winding-sheet;
I canna leave thy comely clay,
An' features calm an' sweet!
I have no hope but for the day
That we shall meet again,
Since thou art gone, my bonnie boy
An' left me here alane.

I hoped thy sire's loved form to see,
To trace his looks in thine;
An' saw with joy thy sparkling e'e
With kindling vigour shine.
I thought, when auld an' frail, I might
Wi' you an' yours remain;
But thou art fled, my bonnie boy,
An' left me here alane.

Now closed an' set thy sparkling eye,
Thy kind wee heart is still,
An' thy dear spirit far away
Beyond the reach of ill.
Ah! fain wad I that comely clay
Reanimate again;
But thou art fled, my bonnie boy,
An' left me here alane.

The flower now fading on the lea
Shall fresher rise to view—
The leaf just falling from the tree
The year will soon renew;
But lang may I weep o'er thy grave,
Ere thou reviv'st again;
For thou art fled, my bonnie boy,
An' left me here alane.

Auld Joe Nicholson's Nanny.

The daisy is fair, the day-lily rare,
The bud o' the rose as sweet as it's bonnie;
But there ne'er was a flower, in garden or bower,
Like auld Joe Nicholson's bonnie Nanny.
O, my Nanny!
My dear little Nanny!
My sweet little niddlety-noddlety Nanny!
There ne'er was a flower,
In garden or bower,
Like auld Joe Nicholson's bonnie Nanny.

Ae day she came out, wi' a rosy blush,
To milk her twa kie, sae couthy and canny;
I cower'd me down at the back o' the bush,
To watch the air o' my bonnie Nanny.
O, my Nanny, &c.

Her looks that stray'd o'er nature away,
Frae bonnie blue e'en sae mild an' mellow,
Saw naething sae sweet in nature's array,
Though clad in the morning's gowden yellow.
O, my Nanny, &c.

My heart lay beating the flowery green
In quaking, quivering agitation,
An' the tears cam tricklin' down frae my een
Wi' perfect love an' wi' admiration.
O, my Nanny, &c.

There's mony a joy in this warld below,
An' sweet the hopes that to sing were uncanny;
But of all the pleasures I ever can know,
There's nane like the love o' my bonnie Nanny.
O, my Nanny!
My dear little Nanny!
My sweet little niddlety-noddlety Nanny!
There ne'er was a flower,
In garden or bower,
Like auld Joe Nicholson's bonnie Nanny.

The Broken Heart

Was written in detestation of the behaviour of a gentleman (can I call him so?) to a dearly-beloved young relative of my own, and whom, at the time I wrote this, I never expected to recover from the shock her kind and affectionate heart had received. It has, however, turned out a lucky disappointment for her.

Now lock my chamber door, father,
And say you left me sleeping;
But never tell my step-mother
Of all this bitter weeping.
No earthly sleep can ease my smart,
Or even a while reprieve it;
For there's a pang at my young heart
That never more can leave it!

Oh, let me lie, and weep my fill
O'er wounds that heal can never;
And O kind Heaven! were it thy will,
To close these eyes for ever;
For how can maid's affections dear
Recall her love mistaken?
Or how can heart of maiden bear
To know that heart forsaken?

Oh, why should vows so fondly made,
Be broken ere the morrow,
To one who loved as never maid
Loved in this world of sorrow?
The look of scorn I cannot brave,
Nor pity's eye more dreary;
A quiet sleep within the grave
Is all for which I weary.

Farewell, dear Yarrow's mountains green,
And banks of broom so yellow!
Too happy has this bosom been
Within your arbours mellow.
That happiness is fled for aye,
And all is dark desponding,
Save in the opening gates of day,
And the dear home beyond them.[1]

Ohon-a-Righ!

A humble petition from the Ettrick Shepherd to his late loved sovereign, King George IV., to restore the titles of the last remnants of the brave defenders of the rights of their ancient dynasty.

Ohon-a-righ!
Ohon-a-righ!
There's nought but alteration
The men that strove
Our throne to move,
And overturn the nation,

[1] As a note to the above song, I may quote a stanza from another poem written at the same time:—

Woe to the guileful tongue that bred
This disappointment and this pain!
Cold-hearted villain! on his head
A minstrel's malison remain!
Guilt from his brow let ne'er depart,
Nor shame until his dying day;
For he has broke the kindest heart
That ever bow'd to nature's sway!

Are a' come round,
Wi' wit profound,
To those they branded sairly;
An' show more might
For George's right
Than e'er they did for Charlie.

The day is past,
It was the last
Of suffering and of sorrow;
And o'er the men
Of northern glen
Arose a brighter morrow.
The pibroch rang
With bolder clang
Along the hills of heather;
An' fresh an' strong
The thistle sprung
That had begun to wither.

Our sovereign gone
Whom we think on
As sons on sire regarded,
Of the plaided north
Beheld the worth
And loyalty rewarded.
Return'd their own,
And to the throne
Bound all their spirits lordly;
Now who will stand,
With dirk or brand,
As Donald does for Geordie?

Beannaich-a-righ!
Beannaich-a-righ!
Her nainsell now be praying;
Though standard praw,
And broadsword law,
She all aside be laying;
With Heelant might,
For Shorge's right,
Cot! put she'll braolich rarely,
Gin lords her nain
Pe lords ackain,
That fell for sake of Charlie!

The Laddie that I ken o'.

There's a bonnie, bonnie laddie that I ken o',
There's a bonnie, bonnie laddie that I ken o';
An' although he be but young,
He has a sweet wooing tongue,
The bonnie, bonnie laddie that I ken o'.

He has woo'd me for his own, an' I trow him, O,
For it's needless to deny that I lo'e him, O;
When I see his face come ben,
Then a' the lads I ken,
I think them sae far, far below him, O.

There is Annie, the demure little fairy, O,
Our Nancy, an' Burns' bonnie Mary, O;
They may set their caps at him,
An' greet till they gae blin',
But his love for his Jean will never vary, O.

He'll come to me at e'en though he's weary, O,
An' the way be baith langsome an' eery, O,
An' he'll tirl at the pin,
An' cry, "Jeanie, let me in,
For my bosom it burns to be near ye, O!"

He's a queer bonnie laddie that I ken o',
He's a dear bonnie laddie that I ken o';
For he'll tak' me on his knee,
An' he'll reave a kiss frae me,
The bonnie, bonnie laddie that I ken o'.

Angel's Morning Song to the Shepherd.

Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!
Over gorse, green broom, and braken;
From her sieve of silken blue,
Dawning sifts her silver dew;
Hangs the emerald on the willow;
Lights her lamp below the billow;
Bends the brier and branchy braken—
Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!

Round and round, from glen and grove,
Pour a thousand hymns to love;
Harps the rail amid the clover,
O'er the moon-fern whews the plover,
Bat has hid and heath-cock crow'd,
Courser neigh'd and cattle low'd,
Kid and lamb the lair forsaken—
Waken, drowsy slumberer, waken!

The Blue and the Yellow.

AIR—"*Whistle, and I'll come to ye, my Lad.*"

If e'er you would be a brave fellow, young man,
Beware of the Blue and the Yellow,[1] young man;
If ye wad be strang,
And wish to write lang,
Come join wi' the lads that get mellow, young man.
Like the crack o' a squib that has fa'en on, young man,
Compared wi' the roar o' a cannon, young man,
So is the Whig's blow,
To the pith that's below
The beard o' auld Geordie Buchanan,[2] young man.

[1] Referring to the *Edinburgh Review*, which has a blue and yellow cover.

[2] Referring to *Blackwood's Magazine*, the cover of which bears a head of George Buchanan.

I heard a bit bird in the braken, young man,
It sang till the Whigs were a' quaking, young man,
And aye the sad lay
Was, Alack for the day!
For the Blue and the Yellow's forsaken, young man.

The day is arriv'd that's nae joking, young man;
'Tis vain to be murmuring and mocking, young man;
A Whig may be leal,
But he'll never fight weel,
As lang as he dadds wi' a docken, young man.

Oh wha wadna laugh at their capers, young man?
Like auld maidens fash'd wi' the vapours, young man,
We have turned them adrift
To their very last shift,
That's—*puffing the Radical Papers, young man.*
If ye wad hear tell o' their pingle,[1] young man,
Gae list the wee bird in the dingle, young man;
Its note o' despair,
Is sae loud in the air,
That the windows of heaven play jingle, young man.

I'll give you a toast of the auldest, young man;
The loyal head ne'er was the cauldest, young man;
"Our king and his throne;
Be his glory our own,
And the last of his days aye the bauldest," young man.—
But as for the loun that wad hector, young man,
And pit us at odds wi' a lecture, young man,
May he dance cutty-mun,[2]
Wi' his neb to the sun,
And his doup to the General Director,[3] young man.

Sir Morgan O'Doherty's Farewell to Scotland.

Farewell, farewell, beggarly Scotland,
Cold and beggarly poor countrie!
If ever I cross thy border again,
The muckle deil must carry me.
There's but one tree in a' the land,
And that's the bonnie gallows tree:
The very nowte look to the south,
And wish that they had wings to flee.

Farewell, farewell, beggarly Scotland,
Brose and bannocks, crowdy and kale!
Welcome, welcome, jolly old England,
Laughing lasses and foaming ale!
'Twas when I came to merry Carlisle,
That out I laughed loud laughters three;
And if I cross the Sark again
The muckle deil maun carry me.

Farewell, farewell, beggarly Scotland,
Kiltit kimmers, wi' carroty hair,
Pipers, who beg that your honours would buy
A bawbee's worth of their famished air!
I'd rather keep Cadwaller's goats,
And feast upon toasted cheese and leeks,
Than go back again to the beggarly North,
To herd 'mang loons with bottomless breeks.

[1] *Pingle*—difficulty.
[2] *Cu'ty-mun*—an old Scottish tune of exceedingly quick and cramp time.
[3] This is a mysterious allusion to that part of Edinburgh where criminals were executed.

Reply to Sir Morgan O'Doherty's Farewell to Scotland.

Go, get thee gone, thou dastardly loon,
Go, get thee to thine own countrie;
If ever you cross the Border again,
The muckle deil accompany thee!
There's mony a tree in fair Scotland,
And there is ane, the gallows tree,
On which we hang the Irish rogues;
A fitting place it is for thee.

Go, get thee gone, thou dastardly loon!
Too good for thee is brose and kale:—
We've lads and ladies gay in the land,
Bonnie lasses, and nut-brown ale.
When thou goest to merry Carlisle,
Welcome take thy loud laughters three;
But know that the most of our beggarly clan
Come from the *Holy Land*, like thee.

Go, get thee gone, thou beggarly loon,
On thee our maidens refused to smile:—
Our pipers they scorn'd to beg from thee,
A half-starved knight of the Emerald Isle.
Go rather and herd thy father's pigs,
And feed on 'tatoes and butter-milk;
But return not to the princely North,
Land of the tartan, the bonnet, and kilt.

King Willie.

Oh, Willie was a wanton wag,
The blithest lad that e'er I saw;
He 'mang the lasses bure the brag,
An' carried aye the gree awa'.
An' was nae Willie weel worth gowd?
When seas did rowe an' winds did blaw,
An' battle's deadly stoure was blent,
He fought the foremost o' them a'.

Wha has nae heard o' Willie's fame,
The rose o' Britain's topmast bough,
Wha never stain'd his gallant name,
Nor turn'd his back on friend or foe?
An' he could tak a rantin' glass,
An' he could chant a cheery strain;
An' he could kiss a bonnie lass,
An' aye be welcome back again.

Though now he wears the British crown,
For whilk he never cared a flee—
Yet still the downright honest tar,
The same kind-hearted chield is he.
An' every night I fill my glass,
An' fill it reaming to the brim,
An' drink it in a glowing health
To Adie Laidlaw[1] an' to him.

I've ae advice to gie my king,
An' that I'll gie wi' right good-will;
Stick by the auld friends o' the crown,
Wha bore it up through good an' ill;
For new-made friends, and new-made laws,
They suit nae honest hearts ava;
An' Royal Willie's worth I'll sing
As lang as I hae breath to draw.

The Flower of Annisley.

Oh, is she gone? Oh, is she gone
From love, from duty, and from me—
The fairest flower the sun shone on,
The lovely maid of Annisley?
Thou lonely mourner, tell to me
Whose was the name thou mentionedst now,
With tear-drops trickling to thy knee,
And scathe of sorrow on thy brow?

Is Ellen's fair and comely mould
The inmate of the darkling worm?
And does the gravel couch enfold
The mildest, comeliest, earthly form?
Yes—here she sleeps in loneliness!
She faded with her virgin fame;
And now her votaries, numberless,
Shun even the mention of her name.

She who gave brilliance to the hall,
And added lightness to the day—
The meteor of the waterfall,
The seraph of the sylvan lay—
Though pure as mortal thing could be,
The idol of the adoring throng,
Emblem of glory's fallacy,
Fell by the shafts of deadly wrong.

'Twas envy poisoned first the dart,
And malice winged it from her bow,
And deeply was the weetless heart
Pierced by the sure and secret blow.
She trembled, wept, and looked to heaven;
The die was cast; relief was none!
Then shunned, unpitied, unforgiven,
Ellen was left to die alone.

As ever you saw the young rose tossed,
Or apple blossom from the tree,
By tempest or untimely frost,
So fell the flower of Annisley.

And never was green leaf on the path,
Or fallen blossom in the clay
Trode down the careless foot beneath,
As was the marvel of her day.

O virgin beauty, thou art sweet!
Sweet to the soul and to the eye!
Thy blush, that comes on fairy feet,
The mirror of the morning sky;
Thy smile of mildness and of love;
The aspirations of thy will
To mercy—well approved above
By one who owns thy nature still;—

All, all bespeak thee Nature's flower,
But oh, what snares are laid for thee!
As is thy virtue's lordly power,
So is thy danger in degree;
And when, in bounding gaiety,
Thou walk'st the brink of fear and fever,
One step aside—and, woe is me!
Thou fall'st to rise no more, for ever.

When doors of mercy fold below,
Turn thou thy spirit's eyes away
To where unnumbered glories glow
In home beyond the solar ray.
But for the flower of Annisley,
While life warms this old breast of mine,
I'll yearly pour regretfully
The hymn of sorrow o'er her shrine.

Oh, Love's a bitter thing to bide.

Oh, love's a bitter thing to bide,
The lad that drees it's to be pitied;
It blinds to a' the world beside,
And maks a body dilde and ditted.
It lies sae sair at my breast bane,
My heart is melting saft an' safter;
To dee outright I wad be fain,
Wer't no for fear what may be after.

I dinna ken what course to steer,
I'm sae to dool an' daftness driven;
For ane sae lovely, sweet, an' dear,
Sure never breath'd the breeze o' heaven.
Oh there's a soul beams in her e'e;
Ae blink o't makes ane's spirit gladder;
And ay the mair she gecks at me,
It pits me aye in love the madder.

Love winna heal, it winna thole,
You canna shun't e'en when you fear it;
An' oh, this sickness o' the soul,
'Tis past the power of man to bear it!
And yet to mak o' her a wife,
I couldna square it wi' my duty;
I'd like to see her a' her life
Remain a virgin in her beauty,

[1] Queen Adelaide.

As pure, as bonnie as she's now,
The walks of human life adorning;
As blithe as bird upon the bough,
As sweet as breeze of summer morning.
Love paints the earth, it paints the sky,
An' tints each lovely hue of Nature,
And makes to the enchanted eye
An angel of a mortal creature.

The Cutting o' my Hair.

Frae royal Wull that wears the crown,
To Yarrow's lowliest shepherd-clown,
Time wears unchancy mortals doun;
I've mark'd it late and air.
The souplest knee at length will crack,
The lythest arm, the sturdiest back—
And little siller Samson lack
For cuttin' o' his hair.

Mysell for speed had not my marrow
Thro' Teviot, Ettrick, Tweed, and Yarrow;
Strang, straight, and swift like winged arrow
At market, tryst, or fair.
But now I'm turn'd a hirplin' carle,
My back it's ta'en the cobbler's swirl,
And deil a bodle I need birl
For cuttin' o' my hair.

On Boswell's green was nane like me;
My hough was firm, my foot was free;
The locks that cluster'd owre my bree
Cost many a hizzie sair.
The days are come I'm no sae crouse—
An ingle cheek—a cogie douce,
An' fash nae shears about the house
Wi' cuttin' o' my hair.

It was an awfu' head I trow,
It waur'd baith young and auld to cow,
An' burnin' red as heather-lowe,
Gar'd neeboors start and stare.
The mair ye cut the mair it grew,
An' aye the fiercer flamed its hue—
I in my time hae paid enew
For cuttin' o' my hair.

But now there's scarce enench to grip—
When last I brought it to the clip,
It gied the shaver's skill the slip
On haffets lank and bare.
Henceforth to this resolve I'll cling,
Whate'er its shape to let it hing,
And keep the cash for ither thing
Than cuttin' o' my hair.

A genuine Lobe-Letter.

My Mary, maiden of my meed,
Thy beauties soon will be my dead;
Thy hair's the sunbeam o' the morn,
Thy lip the rose without the thorn;
The arch above thine e'e sae blue,
A fairy rainbow on the dew:
O Mary, thou art all to me—
This warld holds nought sae sweet as thee!

Thy foot so light, thy step so fleet,
Like the young roe's as lithe and meet,
That scarcely brushes o'er the fell,
The dew-drap frae the heather-bell.
Thy voice upon the breezes light,
In gloaming's cradle-hymn of night,
Sounds like the lute's soft melody,
Or seraph's melting strain, to me.

Then, since I may not, dare not tell,
Whom I so fondly love, and well,
I send you this, my darling maid,
To say what I would oft have said;
In hopes, that when you have it read,
You'll hide it in a snowy bed—
A bed so lovely and so meek,
It would not stain a cherub's cheek.

Then meet me in our trysting dell,
And not one word I'll bid you tell;
The liquid eye the tale will say,
The melting kiss will all betray—
Ay, they will tell, my Mary dear,
What you dare neither say nor hear;
And sweeter to my heart they'll prove,
Than all the winning tales of love!

A Highland Song of Triumph for King William's Birthday.

To the pine of Lochaber,
Due honours be given,
That bourgeons in earth,
And that blossoms to heaven.
Ho urim! sing urim,[1]
With pipe and with tabor,
To the tree of great Bancho,
The lord of Lochaber!
Ho urim! sing urim, &c.

That tree now has flourish'd
From stock that is hoary,
Encircling the ocean
And globe in its glory;
O'ershadow'd the just,
And the wicked restrain'd too;
It has pierced the dark cloud,
And dishevell'd the rainbow.
Ho urim! sing urim, &c.

Long flourish our stem,
And its honours rise prouder;

[1] Urim, *Gael.*—glory

The stem of the Stuart,
And rose of the Tudor.
Ho urim! sing urim!
Let's hallow together
The day that gave birth
To our king and our father.
Ho urim! sing urim, &c.

Ho urim! sing urim!
To the best and the latest,
And honour'd King William,
The last and the greatest.
Heaven's arm be around him
To guard and secure him,
The hearts of his people,
Ho urim! sing urim!

Ho urim! sing urim,
With pipe and with tabor,
To the son of great Baucho,
The lord of Lochaber!

Lass, an ye loe me, tell me now.

"Afore the moorcock begin to craw,
Lass, an ye loe me, tell me now
The bonniest thing that ever ye saw,
For I canna come every night to woo."
"The gouden broom is bonnie to see,
An' sae is the milk-white flower o' the haw,
The daisy's wee freenge is sweet on the lea—
But the bud o' the rose is the bonniest of a'."

"Now, wae light on a' your flow'ry chat!
Lass, an ye loe me, tell me now;
It's no the thing that I would be at,
An' I canna come every night to woo."
"The lamb is bonnie upon the brae,
The leveret friskin' o'er the knowe,
The bird is bonnie upon the tree—
But which is the dearest of a' to you?"

"The thing that I loe best of a',
Lass, an ye loe me, tell me now;
The dearest thing that ever I saw,
Though I canna come every night to woo,
Is the kindly smile that beams on me,
Whenever a gentle hand I press,
And the wily blink frae the dark-blue e'e
Of a dear, dear lassie that they ca' Bess."

"Aha! young man, but I cou'dna see;
What I loe best I'll tell you now,
The compliment that ye sought frae me,
Though ye canna come every night to woo;
Yet I would rather hae frae you
A kindly look, an' a word witha',
Than a' the flowers o' the forest pu',
Than a' the lads that ever I saw."

"Then, dear, dear Bessie, you shall be mine,
Sin' a' the truth ye hae tauld me now;
Our hearts an' fortunes we'll entwine,
An' I'll aye come every night to woo.
For, oh, I canna deserive to thee
The feeling o' love's and nature's law;
How dear this world appears to me
Wi' Bessie, my ain for good an' for a'!"

I'm a' gane wrang.

I'm a' gane wrang! I'm a' gane wrang!
I canna close my wakerife e'e;
What can it be has sent this pang
To my young heart unkend to me?
I'm fear'd, I'm fear'd that it may prove
An ailment which I daurna name;
What shall I do?—If it be love,
I'll dee outright wi' burnin' shame!

I hae a dream baith night an' day,
Of ane that's aye afore my e'e;
An' aye he looks as he wad say
Something that's unco kind to me.
Yet love's a word my youthfu' tongue
Has ne'er durst utter to mysell;
I'm a' gane wrang, an' me sae young,
What shame for maiden's tongue to tell!

I find an aching at my heart,
An' dizziness that ill portends;
A kind o' sweet an' thrilling smart
Gangs prinkling to my fingers' ends.
Then through me wi' a stoundin' pain:
But yet I like that pain to dree;
Then burnin' tears will drap like rain—
'Tis love, as sure as love can be!

I dinna ken what I'm to do,
The end o' this I canna see;
I am sae young an' bonnie too,
'Tis a great pity I should dee.
Yet dee I maun—I canna prove
This tide o' pleasure an' o' pain;
There's nought sae sweet as virgin's love,
But, oh, to be beloved again!

The Covenanter's Scaffold Song.

Sing with me! sing with me!
Weeping brethren, sing with me!
For now an open heaven I see,
And a crown of glory laid for me.
How my soul this earth despises!
How my heart and spirit rises!
Bounding from the flesh I sever:
World of sin, adieu for ever!

Sing with me! sing with me!
Friends in Jesus, sing with me!
All my sufferings, all my woe,
All my griefs I here forego.
Farewell terror, sighing, grieving,
Praying, hearing, and believing,
Earthly trust and all its wrongings,
Earthly love and all its longings.

Sing with me! sing with me!
Blessed spirits, sing with me!
To the Lamb our song shall be,
Through a glad eternity.
Farewell earthly morn and even,
Sun and moon and stars of heaven:
Heavenly portals ope before me,
Welcome, Christ, in all thy glory!

The Shepherd Boy's Song.

Play up, my love, my darling Sue!
That strain was rather mair than common;
The lambies darena chump nor chew,
For listening to my little woman.
An' see how Bawtie's brockit crown
Is gee'd up to the cope o' heaven!
He thinks the fairies are come down
Our wildered correi to enliven.

Play up, my love! That pipe, I vow,
Is mellower than I e'er could trow it;
It never play'd sae sweet till now,
Wi' the sweet breath that passes through it.
Strike A and B, then half the C,
And then a minim soft an' evenly;
But, oh! 'tis a' the same to me—
If there's a tone, the music's heavenly.

Music has power to still the waves—
To break the cloud an' bend the willow—
To wake the dead out o' their graves,
An' bang frae 'neath the stormy billow;
To make the fays o' glen and grove
Skip wildly o'er their velvet flooring;
But when it pours from lips we love,
Oh! 'tis sae sweet, 'tis past enduring!

Maggy o' Buccleuch.

AIR—"*Days of Yore.*"

Oh, cam' ye through the forests green,
By Yarrow's mountains wild an' blue?
Oh, saw ye beauty's rural queen,
The bonnie Maggy o' Buccleuch?
For Maggy is the bonniest flower
On Yarrow braes that ever grew,
That ever graced a vernal bower,
Or frae the gowan brushed the dew.

But oh! it's no her comely face,
Nor blink o' joy that's in her e'e,
Nor her enchanting form o' grace,
That maks the lassie dear to me!
Na, na, it's no the cherry lip,
The rosy cheek an' lily chin,
Which the wild bee wad like to sip—
'Tis the sweet soul that dwells within.

I hae been up the cauldrife north,
'Mang hills an' dells o' frozen brine,
As far as reels the rowin earth,
An' far ayont the burning line;
But a' the lasses e'er I saw,
For modest mien an' lovely hue,
There was na ane amang them a'
Like bonnie Maggy o' Buccleuch.

A Boy's Song.

Where the pools are bright and deep,
Where the gray trout lies asleep,
Up the river and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest;
There to trace the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadow falls the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little sweet maidens from the play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and o'er the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Pull away, Jolly Boys.

Here we go upon the tide,
Pull away, jolly boys;
With heaven for our guide,
Pull away!

Here's a weather-beaten tar,
Britain's glory still his star,
He has borne her thunder's far:
  Pull away, jolly boys,
To yon gallant men-of-war,
  Pull away.

We've with Nelson plough'd the main,
  Pull away, jolly boys;
Now his signal flies again,
  Pull away.
Brave hearts then let us go,
To drub the haughty foe!
Who once again shall know,
  Pull away, gallant boys,
That our backs we never show,
  Pull away.

We have fought and we have sped,
  Pull away, gallant boys,
Where the rolling wave was red,
  Pull away.
We've stood many a mighty shock,
Like the thunder-stricken oak;
We've been bent, but never broke,
  Pull away, gallant boys;
We ne'er brook'd a foreign yoke,
  Pull away.

Here we go upon the deep,
  Pull away, gallant boys;
O'er the ocean let us sweep,
  Pull away.
Round the earth our glory rings;
At the thought my bosom springs,
That where'er our pennant swings,
  Pull away, gallant boys,
Of the ocean we're the kings,
  Pull away.

Stanzas.

My sweet little cherub, how calm thou'rt reposing!
Thy suffering is over, thy mild eye is closing;
This world hath proved to thee a step-dame unfriendly;
But rest thee, my babe, there's a spirit within thee.
A mystery thou art, though unblest and unshriven—
A thing of the earth, and a radiance of heaven;
A flower of the one, thou art fading and dying—
A spark of the other, thou'rt mounting and flying.

Farewell, my sweet baby, too early we sever;
I may come to thee, but to me thou shalt never:
Some angel of mercy shall lead and restore thee,
A pure living flame, to the mansions of glory.
The moralist's boast may sound prouder and prouder,
The hypocrite's prayer rise louder and louder;
But I'll trust my babe in her trial of danger,
To the mercy of Him that was laid in the manger.

March of Intellect.

AIR—"*Fye, let us a' to the bridal.*"

Then fye let us a' to subscribing,
  Since siller is no worth a plack.
And the pence in the kist that lay mouling,
  Will be turned into pounds in a crack!
With our scheming, and steaming, and dreaming,
  Can no cash-burdened Joint-stock be found
To fill the auld moon wi' whale blubber,
  And light her up a' the year round!

Now thieves will be nabb'd by the thousand,
  And houses insured by the street;
And share-holders will scarcely know whether
  They walk on their heads or their feet.
The Celtic will soon compass breeches;
  The shoe-black will swagger in pumps;
And phrenologists club for old perukes,
  To cover their assinine bumps.

Alack for our grandfathers musty!
  Of such on-goings ne'er did they dream;
Soon our Jockies will bizz out, at gloaming,
  To court their kind Jennies by steam;
And the world shall be turned topsy-turvy;
  And the patients their doctors will bleed;
And the dandy, by true gravitation,
  Shall go waltz on the crown of his head.

Then fye let us a' to subscribing,
  And build up a tower to the moon:
An' get fu' on the tap, and, in daffing,
  Dad out the wee stars wi' our shoon;—
Then, hey, fal de ray, fal de rady,
  Let's see a' how proud we can be,
And build ower a brig to Kirkealdy,
  And drown a' the French in the sea!

I dinna blame thy bonnie Face.

I dinna blame thy bonnie face,
  Thy pawky smile an' wit refined,
Nor thy fair form's bewitching grace,
  As lightsome as the mountain wind:
For these how many a lover brooks,
  Since lovelier, man can never see!
But sair I blame thy kindly looks,
  And kindly words thou said'st to me.

I could have gazed both morn and even
  On that entrancing face of thine,
As I would gaze upon the heaven,
  Yet never think of it as mine;
I could have joy'd to see thee blest,
  A comely bride, a happy wife,
But what thy tongue to me profess'd
  Has ruin'd a' my peace for life.

I never valued aught sae dear
As Mary's hand an' Mary's smile;
But, ah! I never had a fear
That baith were grantit to beguile:
Yet I can never cease to love,
And when to Heaven I bow the knee
To ask a blessing from above,
My heart shall ask the same for thee!

Oh, saw ye this sweet bonnie Lassie o' mine?

Oh, saw ye this sweet bonnie lassie o' mine?
Or saw ye the smile on her cheek sae divine?
Or saw ye the kind love that speaks in her e'e?
Sure naebody e'er was sae happy as me!

It's no that she dances sae light on the green;
It's no the simplicity mark'd in her mien;
But oh, it's the kind love that speaks in her e'e,
That makes me as happy as happy can be.

To meet her alane 'mang the green leafy trees,
When naebody kens, an' when naebody sees;
To breathe out the soul in a saft melting kiss—
On earth here there's naething is equal to this.

I have felt every bliss which the soul can enjoy,
When friends circled round me, and nought to annoy;
I have felt every joy that illumines the breast,
When the full flowing bowl is most warmly caress'd;

But oh, there's a sweet and a heavenly charm
In life's early day, when the bosom is warm;
When soul meets wi' soul in a saft melting kiss—
On earth sure there's naething is equal to this!

Auld John Nicol.

I'll sing of an auld forbear o' my ain,
Tweeddlum, twaddlum, twenty-one,
A man that for fun was never outdone,
And his name it was Auld John Nicol o' Whun.

Auld John Nicol he lo'ed his glass,
Tweeddlum, twaddlum, twenty-one,
An' weel he likit the toasts to pass,
An' it's hey for brave John Nicol o' Whun!

Auld John Nicol gaed out to fight, &c.
But a' gaed wrang that should hae gane right; &c.
Then auld John Nicol kneel'd down to pray,
But never a word John Nicol could say.

Auld John Nicol he lo'ed a lass,
But I darena tell you what came to pass;
For the beadle came up in an unco haste,
An' summon'd him down to speak wi' the priest.

Then auld John Nicol he changed his hue,
For his face it grew red, an' his face it grew blue;
John Nicol gaed out, John Nicol gaed in,
An' he wish'd he had been in the well to the chin.

"Shame fa' it!" quo' John, "I often hae thought
Wha wins at woman will lose at nought;
But I hae heart to do ill to nane,
Sae I will e'en mak the lassie my ain."

Then auld John Nicol he got a wife,
And he never got siccan fun in his life;—
Now John Nicol he sings frae morn till e'en,
Tweeddlum, twaddlum, twenty-one,
The happiest man that ever was seen,
An' it's hey for brave John Nicol o' Whun!

What Tongue can speak the glowing Heart?

What tongue can speak the glowing heart,
What pencil paint the glistening eye,
When your command came to depart
From scenes of triumph, hope, and joy?

Cross'd in life—by villains plunder'd,
More than yet you've given belief;
Fortune's bolts have o'er me thunder'd,
Till my very heart is deaf.

Hard lives the willow by the strand,
To every pelting surge a prey;
Nor will it leave its native land,
Till every root is torn away:

So I, like the poor passive willow,
Cling unto my native shore,
Till the next returning billow
Cast me down for evermore.

Ah! who hath seen the desolation
Of the earthquake's dismal reign,
E'er can hope the renovation
Of his peaceful home again?

So I, distracted and forlorn,
Look back upon my youthful prime;
And forward to the happy morn
That frees me from the hand of time.

I'll bid my Heart be still.

I'll bid my heart be still,
And check each struggling sigh;
And there's none e'er shall know
My soul's cherished woe,
When the first tears of sorrow are dry.

They bid me cease to weep,
For glory gilds his name;
  But the deeper I mourn,
  Since he cannot return
To enjoy the bright noon of his fame.

While minstrels wake the lay
For peace and freedom won,
  Like my lost lover's knell
  The tones seem to swell,
And I hear but his death dirge alone.

My cheek has lost its hue,
My eye grows faint and dim,
  But 'tis sweeter to fade
  In grief's gloomy shade,
Than to bloom for another than him.

To Mary at Parting.

Alas, alas! the time draws nigh,
When low that beauteous form shall lie;
That eye that beams with love and duty,
Must quickly lose its beaming beauty;
That heart, that beats so brisk and gaily,
Must turn a clod in yonder valley.
No more the sun shall dawn on thee,
But long thy starless night shall be;
Chill, chill, and damp thy lonely room,
And hemlock o'er thy bosom bloom.
Oh then, be wise—the time draws nigh
When low that beauteous form shall lie!

But oh, within that lovely frame,
There dwells a spark of heavenly flame—
A spark that shall for ever burn,
Smile over nature's closing urn,
And mix its beams in cloudless day,
When sun and stars have passed away!—
To nurse that spark—that ray divine,
The task, the pleasing task be thine;
Then thy delights shall never die,
Though low that beauteous form shall lie.

Good Night, and Joy.

This song was written for, and published as the concluding song of, Smith's "Scottish Minstrel;" a work the music of which is singular for its sweetness and true Scottish simplicity. The song, with a little variation, forms an appropriate conclusion to these simple lyrical effusions.

The year is wearing to the wane,
  An' day is fading west awa';
Loud raves the torrent an' the rain,
  And dark the cloud comes down the shaw;
But let the tempest tout an' blaw
  Upon his loudest winter horn,
Good night, an' joy be wi' you a';
  We'll maybe meet again the morn!

Oh, we hae wander'd far an' wide
  O'er Scotia's hills, o'er firth an' fell,
An' mony a simple flower we've cull'd,
  An' trimm'd them wi' the heather bell!
We've ranged the dingle an' the dell,
  The hamlet an' the baron's ha';
Now let us take a kind farewell,—
  Good night, an' joy be wi' you a'!

Though I was wayward, you were kind,
  And sorrow'd when I went astray;
For oh, my strains were often wild
  As winds upon a winter day.
If e'er I led you from the way,
  Forgie your Minstrel aince for a';
A tear fa's wi' his parting lay,—
  Good night, and joy be wi' you a'!

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

[Although we have borrowed largely from the present autobiography in our Memoir of the Ettrick Shepherd, his own account of himself is too characteristic to be omitted. His virtues, his failings, and his faults; his genius, simplicity, and vanity are so faithfully, and withal so innocently and amusingly portrayed in the following narrative, that its insertion was found necessary to complete the picture of its author; and accordingly, at the risk of wearying the reader by the repetition, it is now given entire.]

I LIKE to write about myself: in fact, there are few things which I like better; it is so delightful to call up old reminiscences. Often have I been laughed at for what an Edinburgh editor styles my good-natured egotism, which is sometimes anything but that; and I am aware that I shall be laughed at again. But I care not: for this *important* Memoir, now to be brought forward for the fourth time,[1] at different periods of my life, I shall narrate with the same frankness as formerly; and in all, relating either to others or myself, speak fearlessly and unreservedly out. Many of those formerly mentioned are no more; others have been unfortunate; but of all I shall tell the plain truth, and nothing but the truth. So, without premising further, I shall proceed with an autobiography, containing much more of a romance than mere fancy could have suggested; and shall bring it forward to the very hour at which I am writing. The following note was prefixed by Sir Walter Scott to the first edition of the Memoir in 1806.

"The friend to whom Mr. Hogg made the following communication had some hesitation in committing it to the public. On the one hand, he was sensible not only that the incidents are often trivial, but that they are narrated in a style more suitable to their importance to the author himself than to their own nature and consequences. But the efforts of a strong mind and vigorous imagination, to develope themselves even under the most disadvantageous circumstances, may be always considered with pleasure, and often with profit; and if, upon a retrospect, the possessor be disposed to view with self complacency his victory under difficulties, of which he only can judge the extent, it will be readily pardoned by those who consider the author's scanty opportunities of knowledge —and remember that it is only on attaining the last and most recondite recess of human science, that we discover how little we really know. To those who are unacquainted with the pastoral scenes in which our author was educated, it may afford some amusement to find real shepherds actually contending for a poetical prize, and to remark some other peculiarities in their habits and manners. Above all, these memoirs ascertain the authenticity of the publication, and are therefore entitled to be prefixed to it."

MITCHELL-SLACK, *Nov.* 1806.

My dear Sir,—According to your request, which I never disregard, I am now going to give you some account of my manner of life and *extensive* education. I must again apprise you, that, whenever I have occasion to speak of myself and my performances, I find it impossible to divest myself of an inherent vanity; but, making allowances for that, I will lay before you the outlines of my life—with the circumstances that gave rise to my juvenile pieces, and my own opinion of them, as faithfully

> As if you were the minister of heaven
> Sent down to search the secret sins of men.

I am the second of four sons by the same father and mother; namely, Robert Hogg and Margaret Laidlaw, and was born on the 25th of January, 1772. My progenitors were all shepherds of this country. My father, like myself, was bred to the occupation of a shepherd, and served in that capacity until his marriage with my mother; about which time, having saved a considerable sum of money, for those days, he took a lease of the farms of Ettrick House and Ettrick Hall. He then commenced dealing in sheep—bought up great numbers, and drove them both to the English and Scottish markets; but at length, owing to a great fall in the price of sheep, and the absconding of his principal debtor, he was ruined, became bankrupt, everything was sold by auction, and my parents were turned out of doors without a farthing in the world. I was then in the sixth year of my age, and remember well the distressed and destitute condition that we were in. At length the late worthy Mr. Brydon, of Crosslee, took compassion upon us; and, taking a short lease of the farm of Ettrick House, placed my father there as his shepherd, and thus afforded him the means of supporting us for a time. This gentleman continued to interest himself in our welfare until the day of his untimely death, when we lost the best friend that we had in the world.

At such an age it cannot be expected that I should have made great progress in learning. The schoolhouse, however, being almost at our door, I had attended it for a short time, and had the honour of standing at the head of a juvenile class, who read the Shorter Catechism and the Proverbs of Solomon. At the next Whitsunday after our expulsion from the farm I was obliged to go to service; and, being only

[1] This was written for a projected collection of his Tales, to be published in London—a work of which only one volume appeared.

seven years of age, was hired by a farmer in the neighbourhood to herd a few cows; my wages for the half year being a ewe lamb and a pair of new shoes. Even at that early age my fancy seems to have been a hard neighbour for both judgment and memory. I was wont to strip off my clothes, and run races against time, or rather against myself; and, in the course of these exploits, which I accomplished much to my own admiration, I first lost my plaid, then my bonnet, then my coat, and, finally, my hosen, for, as for shoes, I had none. In that naked state did I herd for several days, till a shepherd and maid-servant were sent to the hills to look for them, and found them all. Next year my parents took me home during the winter quarter, and put me to school with a lad named Ker, who was teaching the children of a neighbouring farmer. Here I advanced so far as to get into the class who read in the Bible. I had likewise, for some time before my quarter was out, tried writing; and had horribly defiled several sheets of paper with copy-lines, every letter of which was nearly an inch in length.

Thus terminated my education. After this I was never another day at any school whatever. In all, I had spent about half a year at it. It is true, my former master denied this; and when I was only twenty years of age, said, if he was called on to make oath, he would swear I never was at his school. However, I know I was at it for two or three months; and I do not choose to be deprived of the honour of having attended the school of my native parish; nor yet that old John Beattie should lose the honour of such a scholar. I was again, that very spring, sent away to my old occupation of herding cows. This employment, the worst and lowest known in our country, I was engaged in for several years under sundry masters, till at length I got into the more honourable one of keeping sheep.

It will scarcely be believed that at so early an age I should have been an admirer of the other sex. It is nevertheless strictly true. Indeed I have liked the women a great deal better than the men ever since I remember. But that summer, when only eight years of age, I was sent out to a height called Broad-heads with a rosy-cheeked maiden to herd a flock of new-weaned lambs, and I had my mischievous cows to herd besides. But, as she had no dog and I had an excellent one, I was ordered to keep close by her. Never was a master's order better obeyed. Day after day I herded the cows and the lambs both, and Betty had nothing to do but to sit and sew. Then we dined together every day at a well near to the Shiel-sike head, and after dinner I laid my head down on her lap, covered her bare feet with my plaid, and pretended to fall sound asleep. One day I heard her say to herself, "Poor little laddie! he's juist tired to death," and then I wept till I was afraid she would feel the warm tears trickling on her knee. I wished my master, who was a handsome young man, would fall in love with her and marry her, wondering how he could be so blind and stupid as not to do it. But I thought if I were he, I would know well what to do.

There is one circumstance which has led some to imagine that my abilities as a servant had not been exquisite; namely, that when I was fifteen years of age I had served a dozen masters; which circumstance I myself am rather willing to attribute to my having gone to service so young, that I was yearly growing stronger, and consequently adequate to a harder task and an increase of wages: for I do not remember of ever having served a master who refused giving me a verbal recommendation to the next, especially for my inoffensive behaviour. This character, which I some way or other got at my very first outset, has in some degree attended me ever since, and has certainly been of utility to me; yet, though Solomon avers that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," I declare that I have never been so much benefited by mine, but that I would have chosen the latter by many degrees. From some of my masters I received very hard usage; in particular, while with one shepherd, I was often nearly exhausted with hunger and fatigue. All this while I neither read nor wrote; nor had I access to any book save the Bible. I was greatly taken with our version of the Psalms of David, learned the most of them by heart, and have a great partiality for them unto this day. Every little pittance of wages that I earned was carried directly to my parents, who supplied me with what clothes I had. These were often scarcely worthy of the appellation. In particular, I remember being exceedingly bare of shirts: time after time I had but two, which often grew so bad that I was obliged to leave wearing them altogether. At these times I certainly made a very grotesque figure; for, on quitting the shirt, I could never induce my trews, or lower vestments, to keep up to their proper sphere, there being no braces in those days. When fourteen years of age I saved five shillings of my wages, with which I bought an old violin. This occupied all my leisure hours, and has been my favourite amusement ever since. I had commonly no spare time from labour during the day; but when I was not over-fatigued, I generally spent an hour or two every night in sawing over my favourite old Scottish tunes; and my bed being always in stables and cow-houses, I disturbed nobody but myself and my associate quadrupeds, whom I believed to be greatly delighted with my strains. At all events they never complained, which the biped part of my neighbours did frequently, to my pity and utter indignation. This brings to my remembrance an anecdote, the consequence of one of these nocturnal endeavours at improvement.

When serving with Mr. Scott of Singlee, there happened to be a dance one evening, at which a number of the friends and neighbours of the family were present. I, being admitted into the room as a spectator, was all attention to the music; and, on the company breaking up, I retired to my stable-loft, and fell to essaying some of the tunes to which I had been listening. The musician going out to a short distance from the house, and not being aware that another of the same craft was so near him, was not a little surprised when the tones of my old violin assailed his ears. At first he took it for the late warbles of his own ringing through his head; but, on a little attention, he, to his horror and astonishment, perceived that the sounds

were real—and that the tunes which he had lately been playing with so much skill, were now murdered by some invisible being hard by him. Such a circumstance at that dead hour of the night, and when he was unable to discern from what quarter the sounds proceeded, convinced him all at once that it was a delusion of the devil; and, suspecting his intentions from so much familiarity, he fled precipitately into the hall, speechless with affright, and in the utmost perturbation, to the no small mirth of Mr. Scott, who declared that he had lately been considerably annoyed himself by the same discordant sounds.

From Singlee I went to Elibank upon Tweed, where, with Mr. Laidlaw, I found my situation more easy and agreeable than it had ever yet been. I stayed there three half-years—a term longer than usual; and from thence went to Willenslee, to Mr. Laidlaw's father, with whom I served as a shepherd two years, —having been for some seasons preceding employed in working with horses, thrashing, &c.

It was while serving here, in the eighteenth year of my age, that I first got a perusal of the *Life and Adventures of Sir William Wallace*, and the *Gentle Shepherd;* and though immoderately fond of them, yet (what you will think remarkable in one who hath since dabbled so much in verse) I could not help regretting deeply that they were not in prose, that everybody might have understood them; or, I thought if they had been in the same kind of metre with the Psalms, I could have borne with them. The truth is, I made exceedingly slow progress in reading them. The little reading that I had learned I had nearly lost, and the Scottish dialect quite confounded me; so that, before I got to the end of a line, I had commonly lost the rhyme of the preceding one; and if I came to a triplet, a thing of which I had no conception, I commonly read to the foot of the page without perceiving that I had lost the rhyme altogether. I thought the author had been straitened for rhymes, and had just made a part of it do as well as he could without them. Thus, after I got through both works, I found myself much in the same predicament with the man of Eskdalemuir, who had borrowed Bailey's Dictionary from his neighbour. On returning it, the lender asked him what he thought of it. "I dinna ken, man," replied he; I have read it all through, but canna say that I understand it; it is the most confused book that ever I saw in my life!" The late Mrs. Laidlaw of Willenslee took some notice of me, and frequently gave me books to read while tending the ewes; these were chiefly theological. The only one that I remember anything of is Bishop Burnet's *Theory of the Conflagration of the Earth.* Happy it was for me that I did not understand it! for the little of it that I did understand had nearly overturned my brain altogether. All the day I was pondering on the grand millennium and the reign of the saints; and all the night dreaming of new heavens and a new earth—the stars in horror, and the world in flames! Mrs. Laidlaw also gave me sometimes the newspapers, which I pored on with great earnestness—beginning at the date, and reading straight on, through advertisements of houses and lands, balm of Gilead, and everything; and, after all, was often no wiser than when I began. To give you some further idea of the progress I had made in literature—I was about this time obliged to write a letter to my elder brother, and, having never drawn a pen for such a number of years, I had actually forgotten how to make sundry letters of the alphabet; these I had either to print, or to patch up the words in the best way I could without them.

At Whitsunday, 1790, being still only in the eighteenth year of my age, I left Willenslee, and hired myself to Mr. Laidlaw, of Black House, with whom I served as a shepherd ten years. The kindness of this gentleman to me it would be the utmost ingratitude in me ever to forget; for, indeed, it was much more like that of a father than a master—and it is not improbable that I should have been there still, had it not been for the following circumstance.

My brother William had, for some time before, occupied the farm of Ettrick House, where he resided with our parents; but, having taken a wife, and the place not suiting two families, he took another residence, and gave up the farm to me. The lease expiring at Whitsunday, 1803, our possession was taken by a wealthier neighbour.

The first time that I attempted to write verses was in the spring of the year 1796. Mr. Laidlaw having a number of valuable books, which were all open to my perusal, I about this time began to read with considerable attention—and no sooner did I begin to read so as to understand, than, rather prematurely, I began to write. For several years my compositions consisted wholly of songs and ballads made up for the lasses to sing in chorus; and a proud man I was when I first heard the rosy nymphs chaunting my uncouth strains, and jeering me by the still dear appellation of "Jamie the poeter."

I had no more difficulty in composing songs then than I have at present; and I was equally well pleased with them. But then the writing of them!—that was a job! I had no method of learning to write, save by following the Italian alphabet; and though I always stripped myself of coat and vest when I began to pen a song, yet my wrist took a cramp, so that I could rarely make above four or six lines at a sitting. Whether my manner of writing it out was new, I know not, but it was not without singularity. Having very little spare time from my flock, which was unruly enough, I folded and stitched a few sheets of paper, which I carried in my pocket. I had no inkhorn; but in place of it I borrowed a small phial, which I fixed in a hole in the breast of my waistcoat; and having a cork fastened by a piece of twine, it answered the purpose fully as well. Thus equipped, whenever a leisure minute or two offered, and I had nothing else to do, I sat down and wrote out my thoughts as I found them. This is still my invariable practice in writing prose. I cannot make out one sentence by study, without the pen in my hand to catch the ideas as they arise, and I never write two copies of the same thing.

My manner of composing poetry is very different, and, I believe, much more singular. Let the piece be of what length it will, I compose and correct it wholly

in my mind, or on a slate, ere ever I put pen to paper; and then I write it down as fast as the A, B, C. When once it is written, it remains in that state; it being, as you very well know, with the utmost difficulty that I can be brought to alter one syllable, which I think is partly owing to the above practice.

It is a fact, that by a long acquaintance with any poetical piece, we become perfectly reconciled to its faults. The numbers, by being frequently repeated, wear smoother to our minds; and the ideas having been expanded by our reflection on each particular scene or incident therein described, the mind cannot, without reluctance, consent to the alteration of any part of it.

The first time I ever heard of Burns was in 1797, the year after he died. One day during that summer a half-daft man, named John Scott, came to me on the hill, and to amuse me repeated Tam O'Shanter. I was delighted! I was far more than delighted I was ravished! I cannot describe my feelings; but, in short, before Jock Scott left me, I could recite the poem from beginning to end, and it has been my favourite poem ever since. He told me it was made by one Robert Burns, the sweetest poet that ever was born; but that he was now dead, and his place would never be supplied. He told me all about him, how he was born on the 25th of January, bred a ploughman, how many beautiful songs and poems he had composed, and that he had died last harvest, on the 21st of August.

This formed a new epoch of my life. Every day I pondered on the genius and fate of Burns. I wept, and always thought with myself—what is to hinder me from succeeding Burns? I too was born on the 25th of January, and I have much more time to read and compose than any ploughman could have, and can sing more old songs than ever ploughman could in the world. But then I wept again because I could not write. However, I resolved to be a poet, and to follow in the steps of Burns.

I remember in the year 1812, the year before the publication of the "Queen's Wake," that I told my friend, the Rev. James Nicol, that I had an inward consciousness that I should yet live to be compared with Burns; and though I might never equal him in some things, I thought I might excel him in others. He reprobated the idea, and thought the assumption so audacious, that he told it as a bitter jest against me in a party that same evening. But the rest seeing me mortified, there was not one joined in the laugh against me, and Mr. John Grieve[1] replied in these words, which I will never forget, "After what he has done, there is no man can say *what* he may do."

My friend, Mr. William Laidlaw,[2] has often remonstrated with me in vain, on the necessity of a revisal of my pieces; but, in spite of him, I held fast my integrity: I said I would try to write the next better, but that should remain as it was. He was the only person who for many years ever pretended to discover the least merit in my essays, either in verse or prose; and, as he never failed to have plenty of them about him, he took the opportunity of showing them to every person whose capacity he supposed adequate to judge of their merits: but it was all to no purpose; he could make no proselytes to his opinion of any note, save one, who in a little time apostatized, and left us as we were. He even went so far as to break with some of his correspondents altogether, who persisted in their obstinacy. All this had not the least effect upon me; as long as I had his approbation and my own, which last never failed me, I continued to persevere. At length he had the good fortune to appeal to you, who were pleased to back him; and he came off triumphant, declaring that the world should henceforth judge for themselves for him.

I have often opposed his proposals with such obstinacy, that I was afraid of losing his countenance altogether; but none of these things had the least effect upon him; his friendship continued unimpaired, attended with the most tender assiduities for my welfare; and I am now convinced that he is better acquainted with my nature and propensities than I am myself.

I have wandered insensibly from my subject: but to return. In the spring of the year 1798, as Alexander Laidlaw, a neighbouring shepherd, my brother William, and myself, were resting on the side of a hill above Ettrick church, I happened in the course of

[1] Mr. John Grieve, one of Hogg's best friends, was the son of a clergyman of the Reformed Presbyterian or Cameronian Church, and carried on the business of a hat manufacturer in Edinburgh. He was of literary habits himself, and wrote highly creditable verses, but he is mainly to be remembered for the extensive patronage which he bestowed on many suffering men of letters, and for the judgment and good taste which he displayed in estimating their productions. About the year 1818 a disorder in the spine incapacitated him from prosecuting his business, but being by this time possessed of a competency, he was still able to indulge in his literary tastes and benevolent propensities. His summers were now spent at Cacrabank, in Ettrick, and his winters in a cottage in the suburbs of Edinburgh, where were often assembled around his hospitable board men of science and literature of all sects and parties. He died, unmarried, in the spring of 1836, aged about fifty-five years, and was interred in the cemetery of St. Mary's, in Yarrow. The kindness of Grieve to Hogg, in the most disastrous period of the Shepherd's fortunes, is recorded further on in the memoir. In return, Hogg dedicated "Mador of the Moor" to his friend, in a manner highly creditable to both parties. The poet also introduces him as one of the competing minstrels in the "Queen's Wake," where he is thus described:—

> "The bard that night who foremost came,
> Was not enrolled, nor known his name,
> A youth he was of manly mould,
> Gentle as lamb, as lion bold;
> But his fair face and forehead high
> Glowed with instinctive modesty.
> 'Twas said, by bank of southland stream
> Glided his youth in soothing dream:
> The harp he loved, and wont to stray
> Far to the wilds and woods away,
> And sing to brooks that gurgled by
> Of maiden's form, and maiden's eye;
> That, when his dream of youth was past,
> Deep in the shade his harp he cast;
> In busy life his cares beguiled;
> His heart was true, and fortune smiled."

[2] Author of the beautiful song of "Lucy's Flitting." Mr. Laidlaw was long the friend, and for some time the amanuensis, of Sir Walter Scott.

our conversation to drop some hints of my superior talents in poetry. William said, that as to putting words into rhyme, it was a thing which he never could do to any sense: but that if I liked to enter the lists with him in blank verse, he would take me up for any bet that I pleased. Laidlaw declared that he would venture likewise. This being settled, and the judges named, I accepted the challenge; but a dispute arising respecting the subject, we were obliged to resort to the following mode of decision: Ten subjects having been named, the lots were cast, and, amongst them all, that which fell to be elucidated by our matchless pens, was *the stars!*—things which we knew little more about than merely that they were burning and twinkling over us, and to be seen every night when the clouds were away. I began with high hopes and great warmth, and in a week declared my theme ready for the comparison; Laidlaw announced his next week; but my brother made us wait a full half year; and then, on being urged, presented his unfinished. The arbiters were then dispersed, and the cause was never properly judged; but those to whom they were shown rather gave the preference to my brother's. This is certain, that it was far superior to either of the other two in the sublimity of the ideas; but, besides being in bad measure, it was often bombastical. The title of it was "Urania's Tour;" that of Laidlaw's, "Astronomical Thoughts;" and that of mine, "Reflections on a View of the Nocturnal Heavens."

Alexander Laidlaw and I tried, after the same manner, a paraphrase of the 117th Psalm, in English verse. I continued annually to add numbers of smaller pieces of poetry and songs to my collection, mostly on subjects purely ideal, or else legendary. I had from my childhood been affected by the frequent return of a violent inward complaint; and it attacked me once in a friend's house, at a distance from home, and, increasing to an inflammation, all hopes were given up of my recovery. While I was lying in the greatest agony, about the dead of the night, I had the mortification of seeing the old woman, who watched over me, fall into a swoon, from a supposition that she saw my *wraith:*—a spirit which the vulgar suppose haunts the abodes of such as are instantly to die, in order to carry off the soul as soon as it is disengaged from the body: and next morning I overheard a consultation about borrowing sheets to lay me in at my decease; but almighty God in his providence deceived both them and the officious spirit; for, by the help of an able physician, I recovered, and have never since been troubled with the distemper.

My first published song was "Donald M'Donald," which I composed this year, 1800, on the threatened invasion by Bonaparte. The first time I sung it was to a party of social friends at the Crown Tavern, Edinburgh. They commended it, on which I proffered it to one of them for his magazine. He said it was much too good for that, and advised me to give it to Mr. John Hamilton, who would set it to music, and get it engraved. I did so; and went away again to the mountains, where I heard from day to day that the popularity of my song was unbounded, and yet no one ever knew, or inquired who was the author.

There chanced to be about that time a great masonic meeting in Edinburgh, the Earl of Moira in the chair; on which occasion Mr. Oliver, of the house of Oliver and Boyd, then one of the best singers in Scotland, sung "Donald M'Donald." It was loudly applauded, and three times encored; and so well pleased was Lord Moira with the song, that he rose and in a long speech descanted on the utility of such songs at that period—thanked Mr. Oliver, and proffered him his whole interest in Scotland. This to the singer; yet, strange to say, he never inquired who was the author of the song!

There was at that period, and a number of years afterwards, a General M'Donald, who commanded the northern division of the British army. The song was sung at his mess every week-day, and sometimes twice and thrice. The old man was proud of, and delighted in it, and was wont to snap his thumbs and join in the chorus. He believed, to his dying day, that it was made upon himself; yet neither he nor one of his officers ever knew or inquired who was the author—so thankless is the poet's trade!

In 1801, believing that I was then become a grand poet, I most sapiently determined on publishing a pamphlet, and appealing to the world at once. This noble resolution was no sooner taken than executed; a proceeding much of a piece with many of my subsequent transactions. Having attended the Edinburgh market one Monday, with a number of sheep for sale, and being unable to dispose of them all, I put the remainder into a park until the market on Wednesday. Not knowing how to pass the interim, it came into my head that I would write a poem or two from my memory, and get them printed. The thought had no sooner struck me than it was put in practice; and I was obliged to select, not the best poems, but those that I remembered best. I wrote several of these during my short stay, and gave them all to a person to print at my expense, and, having sold off my sheep on Wednesday morning, I returned to the Forest. I saw no more of my poems until I received word that there were one thousand copies thrown off. I knew no more about publishing than the man of the moon; and the only motive that influenced me was the gratification of my vanity by seeing my works in print. But no sooner did the first copy come to hand than my eyes were open to the folly of my conduct; for, on comparing it with the MS. which I had at home, I found many of the stanzas omitted, others misplaced, and typographical errors abounding in every page.

Thus were my first productions pushed headlong into the world, without either patron or preface, or even apprising the public that such a thing was coming, and "unhousell'd, unanointed, unaneled, and with all their imperfections on their heads." "Will an' Keatie," however, had the honour of being copied into some periodical publications of the time, as a favourable specimen of the work. Indeed, all of them were sad stuff, although I judged them to be exceedingly good.

The truth was, that notwithstanding my pride of authorship, in a few days I had discernment enough left to wish my publication far enough, and I had

hopes that long ago it had been consigned to eternal oblivion; when, behold! a London critic had in malice of heart preserved a copy, and quoted liberally out of it last year, to my intense chagrin and mortification.

On the appearance of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, I was much dissatisfied with the imitations of the ancient ballads contained in it, and immediately set about imitating the ancient ballads myself—selecting a number of traditionary stories, and put them in metre, by chanting them to certain old tunes. In these I was more successful than in anything I had hitherto tried, although they were still but rude pieces of composition.

The above is the substance of three letters, written in the same year, and alluding mostly to Poetical Trifles. Since that time I have experienced a very unexpected reverse of fortune. After my return from the Highlands in June last, I put everything in readiness for my departure to settle in Harris, and I wrote and published my "Farewell to Ettrick," wherein the real sentiments of my heart at that time are simply related, which constitute its only claim to merit. It would be tedious and trifling were I to relate all the disagreeable circumstances which ensued; suffice it to say that my scheme was absolutely frustrated.

Miserably disappointed, and vexed at having been thus baffled in an undertaking about which I had talked so much, to avoid a great many disagreeable questions and explanations, I went to England during the remainder of the summer. On my return to Scotland, having lost all the money that I had made by a regular and industrious life, and in one week too, I again cheerfully hired myself as a shepherd, with Mr. Harkness, of Mitchel-Slack, in Nithsdale. It was while here that I published "The Mountain Bard," consisting of the above-mentioned ballads. Sir Walter, then Mr. Scott, had encouraged the publication of the work in some letters that he sent me; consequently I went to Edinburgh to see about it. He went with me to Mr. Constable, who received me very kindly, but told me frankly that my poetry would not sell. I said I thought it was as good as anybody's I had seen. He said that might be, but that nobody's poetry would sell; it was the worst stuff that came to market, and that he found; but, as I appeared to be a gey queer chiel, if I would procure him two hundred subscribers he would publish my work for me, and give me as much for it as he could. I did not like the subscribers much; but, having no alternative, I accepted the conditions. Before the work was ready for publication, I had got above five hundred subscribers; and Mr. Constable, who by that time had conceived a better opinion of the work, gave me half-guinea copies for all my subscribers, and a letter for a small sum over and above. I have forgot how much; but, upon the whole, he acted with great liberality. He gave me likewise that same year, £86 for that celebrated work, *Hogg on Sheep;* and I was now richer than I had ever been before.

I had no regular plan of delivering those copies that were subscribed for, but sent them simply to the people, intending to take their money in return; but though some paid me double, triple, and even ten times the price, about one-third of my subscribers thought proper to take the copies for nothing, never paying for them to this day.

Being now master of nearly £300, I went perfectly mad. I first took one pasture farm, at exactly one-half more than it was worth, having been cheated into it by a great rascal, who meant to rob me of all I had, and which, in the course of one year, he effected by dint of law. But, in the meantime, having taken another extensive farm, I found myself fairly involved in business far above my capital. It would have required at least £1000 for every £100 that I possessed to have managed all I had taken in hand; so I got every day out of one strait and confusion into a worse. I blundered and struggled on for three years between these two places, giving up all thoughts of poetry or literature of any kind. I have detailed these circumstances in a larger MS. work; but though they are most laughable, they must be omitted here, as it is only a short sketch of my literary life that I can include in this introduction.

Finding myself at length fairly run aground, I gave my creditors all that I had, or rather suffered them to take it, and came off and left them. I never asked any settlement, which would not have been refused me; and severely have I smarted for that neglect since. None of these matters had the least effect in depressing my spirits—I was generally rather most cheerful when most unfortunate. On returning again to Ettrick Forest, I found the countenances of all my friends altered; and even those whom I had loved and trusted most, disowned me, and told me so to my face; but I laughed at and despised these persons, resolving to show them by and by that they were in the wrong. Having appeared as a poet, and a speculative farmer besides, no one would now employ me as a shepherd. I even applied to some of my old masters, but they refused me, and for a whole winter I found myself without employment, and without money, in my native country; therefore, in February, 1810, in utter desperation, I took my plaid about my shoulders, and marched away to Edinburgh, determined, since no better could be, to push my fortune as a literary man. It is true, I had estimated my poetical talent high enough, but I had resolved to use it only as a staff, never as a crutch; and would have kept that resolve, had I not been driven to the reverse. On going to Edinburgh, I found that my poetical talents were rated nearly as low there as my shepherd qualities were in Ettrick. It was in vain that I applied to newsmongers, booksellers, editors of magazines, &c., for employment. Any of these were willing enough to accept of my lucubrations, and give them publicity, but then there was no money going—not a farthing; and this suited me very ill.

I again applied to Mr. Constable to publish a volume of songs for me; for I had nothing else by me but the songs of my youth, having given up all these exercises so long. He was rather averse to the expedient; but he had a sort of kindness for me, and did not like to

refuse; so after waiting on him three or four times, he agreed to print an edition and give me half the profits. He published one thousand copies, at five shillings each; but he never gave me anything; and as I feared the concern might not have proved a good one, I never asked any remuneration.

The name of this work was "The Forest Minstrel;" of which about two-thirds of the songs were my own, the rest furnished by correspondents—a number of them by the ingenious Mr. T. M. Cunningham. In general they are not good, but the worst of them are all mine, for I inserted every ranting rhyme that I had made in my youth, to please the circles about the firesides in the country; and all this time I had never been once in any polished society—had read next to nothing—was now in the thirty-eighth year of my age, and knew no more of human life or manners than a child. I was a sort of natural songster, without another advantage on earth. Fain would I have done something; but, on finding myself shunned by every one, I determined to push my own fortune independent of booksellers, whom I now began to view as enemies to all genius. My plan was to begin a literary weekly paper, a work for which I certainly was rarely qualified, when the above facts are considered. I tried Walker and Greig, and several printers, offering them security to print it for me.—No; not one of them would print it without a bookseller's name to it as publisher. "Confound them," said I to myself, as I was running from one to another, "the folks here are all combined in a body." Mr. Constable laughed at me exceedingly, and finally told me he wished me too well to encourage such a thing. Mr. Ballantyne was rather more civil, and got off by subscribing for so many copies, and giving me credit for ten pounds worth of paper. David Brown would have nothing to do with it, unless some gentleman, whom he named, should contribute. At length I found an honest man, James Robertson, a bookseller in Nicholson Street, whom I had never before seen or heard of, who undertook it at once on my own terms; and on the 1st of September, 1810, my first number made its appearance on a quarto demy sheet, price fourpence.

A great number were sold, and many hundreds delivered gratis; but one of Robertson's boys, a great rascal, had demanded the price in full for all that he was to have delivered gratis. They showed him the imprint, that they were to be delivered gratis: "So they are," said he; "I take nothing for the delivery; but I must have the price of the paper, if you please."

This money that the boy brought me, consisting of a few shillings and an immense number of halfpence, was the first and only money I had pocketed of my own making, since my arrival in Edinburgh in February. On the publication of the first two numbers, I deemed I had as many subscribers as, at all events, would secure the work from being dropped; but on the publication of my third or fourth number, I have forgot which, it was so indecorous, that no fewer than seventy-three subscribers gave up. This was a sad blow for me; but as usual, I despised the fastidiousness and affectation of the people, and continued my work. It proved a fatal oversight for the paper, for all those who had given in set themselves against it with the utmost inveteracy. The literary ladies, in particular, agreed, in full divan, that I would never write a sentence which deserved to be read. A reverend friend of mine has often repeated my remark on being told of this—"Gaping deevils! wha cares what they say? If I leeve ony time, I'll let them see the contrary o' that."

My publisher, James Robertson, was a kind-hearted, confused body, who loved a joke and a dram. He sent for me every day about one o' clock, to consult about the publication; and then we uniformly went down to a dark house in the Cowgate, where we drank whisky and ate rolls with a number of printers, the dirtiest and leanest-looking men I had ever seen. My youthful habits having been so regular, I could not stand this; and though I took care, as I thought, to drink very little, yet when I went out, I was at times so dizzy I could scarcely walk; and the worst thing of all was, I felt that I was beginning to relish it.

Whenever a man thinks seriously of a thing, he generally thinks aright. I thought frequently of these habits and connections, and found that they never would do; and that, instead of pushing myself forward, as I wished, I was going straight to the devil. I said nothing about this to my respectable acquaintances, nor do I know if they ever knew or suspected what was going on; but, on some pretence or other, I resolved to cut all connection with Robertson; and sorely against his will, gave the printing to the Messrs. Aikman, then proprietors of the Star newspaper, showing them the list of subscribers, of which they took their chance, and promised me half profits. At the conclusion of the year, instead of granting me any profits, they complained of being minus, and charged me with the half of the loss. This I refused to pay, unless they could give me an account of all the numbers published, on the sale of which there should have been a good profit. This they could not do; so I paid nothing, and received as little. I had, however, a good deal to pay to Robertson, who likewise asked more; so that after a year's literary drudgery, I found myself a loser rather than a gainer.

The name of this periodical was the *Spy*. I continued it for a year, and to this day I cannot help regarding it as a literary curiosity. It has, doubtless, but little merit; but yet, I think that, all circumstances considered, it is rather wonderful. In my farewell paper I see the following sentence occurs, when speaking of the few who stood friends to the work:

"They have, at all events, the honour of patronizing an undertaking quite new in the records of literature; for that a common shepherd, who never was at school; who went to service at seven years of age, and could neither read nor write with any degree of accuracy when thirty; yet, who, smitten with an unconquerable thirst after knowledge, should leave his native mountains, and his flocks to wander where they chose, come to the metropolis with his plaid wrapped about his shoulders, and all at once set up for a connoisseur in manners, taste, and genius—has much more the appearance of a romance than a matter of fact; yet a

matter of fact it certainly is;—and such a person is the editor of the *Spy*."

I began it without asking, or knowing of any assistance; but when Mr. and Mrs. Gray[1] saw it was on foot, they interested themselves in it with all their power, and wrote a number of essays for it. Several other gentlemen likewise contributed a paper quietly now and then, and among others Robert Sym, Esq., which I never discovered till after the work was discontinued. Professor T. Gillespie, the Rev. Wm. Gillespie, J. Black of the *Morning Chronicle*, and sundry others, lent me an occasional lift. The greater part, however, is my own writing, and consists of four hundred and fifteen quarto pages, double columned—no easy task for one person to accomplish in a year. I speak of this work as of one that existed, for it flew abroad, like the sibyl's papers, every week, and I believe there are not above five complete copies existing, if indeed there is one; and, as it never will be reprinted, if the scarcity of a work makes it valuable, no one can be more so, to exist at all.

All this while there was no man who entered into my views, and supported them, save Mr. John Grieve, a friend, whose affection neither misfortune nor imprudence could once shake. Evil speakers had no effect on him. We had been acquainted from our youth; and he had formed his judgment of me as a man and a poet; and from that nothing could ever make him abate one item. Mr. Grieve's opinion of me was by far too partial, for it amounted to this, that he never conceived any effort in poetry above my reach, if I would set my mind to it; but my carelessness and indifference he constantly regretted and deprecated. During the first six months that I resided in Edinburgh, I lived with him and his partner, Mr. Scott, who, on a longer acquaintance, became as firmly attached to me as Mr. Grieve; and, I believe, as much so as to any other man alive. We three have had many very happy evenings together; we indeed were seldom separate when it was possible to meet. They suffered me to want for nothing, either in money or clothes; and I did not even need to ask these. Mr. Grieve was always the first to notice my wants, and prevent them. In short, they would not suffer me to be obliged to any one but themselves for the value of a farthing; and without this sure support I could never have fought my way in Edinburgh. I was fairly starved into it, and if it had not been for Messrs. Grieve and Scott, would, in a very short time, have been starved out of it again.

The next thing in which I became deeply interested, in a literary way, was the FORUM, a debating society, established by a few young men, of whom I, though far from being a young man, was one of the first. We opened our house to the public, making each individual pay a sixpence, and the crowds that attended for three years running, were beyond all bounds. I was appointed secretary with a salary of twenty pounds a-year, which never was paid, though I gave away a great deal in charity. We were exceedingly improvident; but I never was so much advantaged by anything as by that society; for it let me feel, as it were, the pulse of the public, and precisely what they would swallow, and what they would not. All my friends were averse to my coming forward in the Forum as a public speaker, and tried to reason me out of it, by representing my incapacity to harangue a thousand people in a speech of half an hour. I had, however, given my word to my associates, and my confidence in myself being unbounded, I began, and came off with flying colours. We met once a week. I spoke every night, and sometimes twice the same night; and though I sometimes incurred pointed disapprobation, was in general a prodigious favourite. The characters of all my brother members are given in the larger work, but here they import not. I have scarcely known any society of young men who have all got so well on. Their progress has been singular; and, I am certain, people may say what they will, that they were greatly improved by their weekly appearances in the Forum. Private societies signify nothing; but a discerning public is a severe test, especially in a multitude, where the smallest departure from good taste, or from the question, was sure to draw down disapproval, and where no good saying ever missed observation and applause. If this do not assist in improving the taste, I know not what will. Of this I am certain, that I was greatly the better for it, and I may safely say, I never was in a school before. I might and would have written "The Queen's Wake" had the Forum never existed, but without the weekly lessons that I got there I could not have succeeded as I did. Still our meetings were somewhat ludicrous, especially the formality of some of the presidents. To me they were so irresistible, that I wrote a musical farce in three acts, called "The Forum, a Tragedy for Cold Weather," wherein all the members are broadly taken off, myself not excepted, and some of our evening scenes depicted. I believe it is a good thing of the kind, at least I remember thinking so at the time; but it was so severe on some of my friends, who had a few peculiarities about them, that I never showed it to any one. I have it by me; but I believe never man saw it save myself. About the same time I wrote another musical drama of three acts, and showed it to Mr. Siddons. He approved of it very highly, with the exception of some trivial scene, which I promised to alter, and he undertook to have it acted on the return of the season; but I never saw him again. He was always kind and friendly to me, and made me free to the theatre from year to year.

During the time that the Forum was going on, the poetry of Mr. Walter Scott and Lord Byron was exciting general attention. I had published some pieces in the *Spy* that Grieve thought exceedingly good; and nothing would serve him but that I should take the field once more as a poet, and try my fate with others. I promised; and having some ballads or metrical tales by me, which I did not like to lose, I planned "The Queen's Wake," in order that I might take these all in, and had it ready in a few months after it was first proposed. I was very anxious to read it to some person of taste; but no one would either read it, or listen to my reading it, save Grieve, who

[1] [Mr. James Gray of the High School, Edinburgh.]

assured me it would do. As I lived at Deanhaugh then, I invited Mr. and Mrs. Gray to drink tea, and to read a part of it with me before offering it for publication. Unluckily, however, before I had read half a page, Mrs. Gray objected to a word, which Mr. Grieve approved of and defended, and some high disputes arose; other authors were appealed to, and notwithstanding my giving several very broad hints, I could not procure a hearing for another line of my new poem. Indeed, I was sorely disappointed, and told my friends so on going away; on which another day was appointed, and I took my manuscript to Buccleugh Place. Mr. Gray had not got through the third page when he was told that an itinerant bard had entered the lobby, and was repeating his poetry to the boarders. Mr. Gray went out and joined them, leaving me alone with a young lady, to read or not, as we liked. In about half an hour he sent a request for me likewise to come: on which I went, and heard a poor crazy beggar repeating such miserable stuff as I had never heard before. I was terribly affronted; and putting my manuscript in my pocket, I jogged away home in very bad humour. Gray has sometimes tried to deny the truth of this anecdote, and to face me out of it, but it would not do. I never estimated him the less as a friend; but I did not forget it in one point of view, for I never read any more new poems to him.

I next went to my friend Mr. Constable, and told him my plan of publication; but he received me coldly, and told me to call again. I did so—when he said he would do nothing until he had seen the MS. I refused to give it, saying, "What skill have you about the merits of a book?"—"It may be so, Hogg," said he; "but I know as well how to sell a book as any man, which should be some concern of yours; and I know how to buy one too!"

Finally, he told me, that if I would procure him two hundred subscribers, to insure him from loss, he would give me £100 for liberty to print one thousand copies; and more than that he would not give. I felt I should be obliged to comply; and, with great reluctance, got a few subscription papers thrown off privately, and gave them to friends, who soon procured me the requisite number. But before this time, one George Goldie, a young bookseller in Princes Street, a lad of some taste, had become acquainted with me at the Forum, and earnestly requested to see my MS. I gave it to him with reluctance, being predetermined to have nothing to do with him. He had not, however, well looked into the work till he thought he perceived something above common-place; and, when I next saw him, he was intent on being the publisher of the work, offering me as much as Mr. Constable, and all the subscribers to myself over and above. I was very loath to part with Mr. Constable; but the terms were so different, that I was obliged to think of it. I tried him again; but he had differed with Mr. Scott, and I found him in such bad humour, that he would do nothing further than curse all the poets, and declare that he had met with more ingratitude from literary men than all the rest of the human race. Of course Goldie got the work, and it made its appearance in the spring of 1813.

As I said, nobody had seen the work; and, on the day after it was published, I went up to Edinburgh as anxious as a man could be. I walked sometimes about the streets, and read the title of my book on the booksellers' windows, yet I durst not go into any of the shops. I was like a man between death and life, waiting for the sentence of the jury. The first encouragement that I got was from my countryman, Mr. William Dunlop, who, on observing me going sauntering up the plainstones of the High Street, came over from the cross, arm in arm with another gentleman, a stranger to me. I remember his salutation word for word; and singular as it was, it made a strong impression, for I knew that Mr. Dunlop had a great deal of rough common sense.

"Ye useless poetical deevil that ye're!" said he, "what hae ye been doing a' this time?"—"What doing, Willie! what do you mean?" "Ye hae been pestering us wi' fourpenny papers an' daft shilly-shally sangs, an' bletherin' an' speakin' i' the Forum, an' yet had stuff in ye to produced a thing like this!"—"Ay, Willie," said I, "have you seen my new beuk?"—"Ay, faith, that I have, man; and it has cheated me out o' a night's sleep. Ye hae hit the right nail on the head now. Yon's the very thing, sir."—"I'm very glad to hear you say sae, Willie; but what do ye ken about poems?"—"Never ye mind how I ken; I gi'e ye my word for it, yon's the thing that will do. If ye hadna made a fool o' yoursel' afore, man, you wad hae sold better than ever a book sold. 'Od! wha wad hae thought there was as muckle in that sheep's-head o' your's?" And with that he went away, laughing and miscalling me over his shoulder.

This address gave me a little confidence, and I faced my acquaintances one by one; and everything that I heard was laudatory. The first report of any work that goes abroad, be it good or bad, spreads like fire set to a hill of heather in a warm spring day, and no one knows where it will stop. From that day forward, every one has spoken well of the work; and every review praised its general features, save the *Eclectic*, which, in the year 1813, tried to hold it up to ridicule and contempt. Mr. Jeffrey ventured not a word about it either good or bad, himself, until the year after, when it had fairly got into a second and third edition. He then gave a very judicious and sensible review of it; but he committed a most horrible blunder, in classing Mr. Tennant, the author of "Anster Fair," and me together, as two self-taught geniuses; whereas there was not one point of resemblance.[1] Tennant being a better educated man than the reviewer himself, was not a little affronted at being classed with me. From that day to this Mr. Jeffrey has taken no

[1] [Mr. Jeffrey committed no such "blunder," as he is here accused of. "The Queen's Wake" and "Anster Fair" were reviewed in the same number of the *Edinburgh Review*, *in separate articles*. The authors were spoken of as both originally belonging to an humble condition of life, but no further parallel was drawn between them. Mr. Tennant's scholarship is not over looked in the *Review*; on the contrary, he is recognized as being a "distinguished proficient in classical learning" and in "the modern languages."]

notice of anything that I have published, which I think can hardly be expected to do him any honour at the long run. I should like the worst poem that I have since published to stand a fair comparison with some that he has strained himself to bring forward. It is a pity that any literary connection, which with the one party might be unavoidable, should ever prejudice one valued friend and acquaintance against another. In the heart-burnings of party spirit, the failings of great minds are more exposed than in all other things in the world put together.

Mr. Goldie had little capital, and less interest among the trade; nevertheless he did all for my work that lay in his power, and sold two editions of it in a short time. About that period a general failure took place among the secondary class of booksellers, and it was reported that Goldie was so much involved with some of the houses, that it was impossible he could escape destruction. A third edition of my poem was wanted, and, without more ado, I went and offered it to Mr. Constable. We closed a bargain at once, and the book was sent to Mr. Ballantyne to print. But after a part was thrown off, Goldie got notice of the transaction, and was neither to hold nor bind, pretending that he had been exceedingly ill-used. He waited on Mr. Constable one hour, and corresponded with him the next, till he induced him to give up the bargain. It was in vain that I remonstrated, affirming that the work was my own, and I would give it to whom I pleased. I had no one to take my part and I was browbeaten out of it—Goldie alleging that I had no reason to complain, as he now entered precisely into Constable's terms, and had run all the risk of the former editions. I durst not say that he was going to break, and never pay me; so I was obliged to suffer the edition to be printed off in Goldie's name. This was exceeding ill done of him—nothing could be more cruel—and I was grieved that he did so, for I had a good opinion of him. The edition had not been lodged in his premises a week before he stopped payment, and yet, in that time he had contrived to sell, or give away, more than one half of the copies; and thus all the little money that I had gained, which I was so proud of, and on which I depended for my subsistence, and the settling of some old farming debts that were pressing hard upon me, vanished from my grasp at once.[1]

It was on the occasion of Mr. Blackwood being appointed one of the trustees upon the bankrupt estate that I was first introduced to him. I found him and the two Messrs. Bridges deeply interested in my case. I shall never forget their kindness and attention to my interests at that unfortunate period. I applied to Mr. Samuel Aitken, who was the head trustee, with fear and trembling, for I judged of him as a severe and strict man, who I knew would do justice to me, but I expected nothing further. When I waited on him he looked at me with his gray stiff eye. "It is all over with me here," thought I. I never was more mistaken in my life; for no sooner had I stated my case than Samuel entered into my interests with his whole heart, and said, that provided he could save the creditors from losing anything, which he was bound to do, he saw no right they had to make anything by my edition. He then and there consigned over to me the whole of the remaining copies, 490 in number, charging me only with the expenses of printing, &c. These, to my agreeable astonishment, amounted only to two shillings and tenpence halfpenny per volume. The work sold at twelve shillings, so that a good reversion appeared to be mine. Mr. Blackwood sold the copies for me on commission, and ultimately paid me more than double of what I was to have received from Goldie. For this I was indebted to the consideration and kindness of the trustees.

I had likewise, before this time, been introduced to most of the great literary characters in the metropolis, and lived with them on terms of intimacy, finding myself more and more a welcome guest at all their houses. However, I was careful not to abuse their indulgence; for, with the exception of a few intimate friends, I made myself rather scarce. I was indebted for these introductions, in a great degree, to the Rev. Dr. Morehead, one of the most amiable men I have ever known, and to two worthy ladies of the name of Lowes.

On the appearance of Mr. Wilson's "Isle of Palms," I was so greatly taken with many of his fanciful and visionary scenes, descriptive of bliss and woe, that it had a tendency to divest me occasionally of all worldly feelings. I reviewed this poem, as well as many others, in a Scottish review then going on in Edinburgh, and was exceedingly anxious to meet with the author; but this I tried in vain for the space of six months. All I could learn of him was, that he was a man from the mountains in Wales, or the west of England, with hair like eagles' feathers, and nails like birds' claws, a red beard, and an uncommon degree of wildness in his looks. Wilson was then utterly unknown in Edinburgh, except slightly to Mr. Walter Scott, who never introduces any one person to another, nor judges it of any avail. However, having no other shift left, I sat down and wrote him a note, telling him that I wished much to see him, and if he wanted to see me, he might come and dine with me at my lodgings in the Road of Gabriel, at four. He accepted the invitation, and dined with Grieve and me; and I found him so much a man according to my own heart, that for many years we were seldom twenty-four hours asunder, when in town. I afterwards went and visited him, staying with him a month at his seat in Westmoreland, where we had some curious doings among the gentlemen and poets of the lakes. It is a pity I have not room here to give a description of all these scenes, being obliged, according to my plan, to return to a subject far less interesting, namely, my own literary progress.

"The Queen's Wake" being now consigned to Messrs. Murray & Blackwood, I fairly left it to its fate; and they published a fourth edition, which was in fact not a new edition, but only the remainder of Goldie's third; so that I gained an edition in the eyes of the world,

[1] [Mr. Goldie, we believe, published a counter statement to this, in which he exonerated himself from having dealt unfairly by the Shepherd.]

although not in the weight of my purse, to which this edition in reality made no *addition*.. It has, however, been a good work to me, and has certainly been read and admired much above what its merits warrant.

The same year in which I wrote the two musical dramas, I also wrote a tragedy, which was called "The Hunting of Badlewe;" but of this, Goldie only printed a few copies, to see how the public relished it. It was not favourably received;—but more of this hereafter.

Although it should rather have been mentioned at a period subsequent to this, I may take notice here, that the *fifth edition* of "The Queen's Wake," in royal octavo, with plates, was a plan concocted by Mr. Blackwood to bring me in a little money. He was assisted in this undertaking by Charles Sharpe, Esq., Mr. Walter Scott, and several other friends; but most of all by the indefatigable Mr. David Bridges, junr., a man that often effects more in one day than many others can do in six, and who is, in fact, a greater prodigy than any self-taught painter or poet in the kingdom.

The only other anecdote which I have recorded in my diary relating to this poem is one about the dedication. As it related to the amusements of a young queen, I thought I could dedicate it to no one so appropriately as to her royal and beautiful descendant, the Princess Charlotte; which I did. By the advice of some friends, I got a large paper copy bound up in an elegant antique style, which cost three guineas, and sent it as a present to her Royal Highness, directing it to the care of Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, and requesting him to present it to his royal pupil. His lordship was neither at the pains to acknowledge the receipt of the work or of my letter, nor, I dare say, to deliver it as directed. The dedication I have never had the heart to cancel, even now when she is no more, and I have let the original date remain.

During all this time I generally went on a tour into the Highlands every summer, and always made a point of tarrying some time at Kinnaird House in Athol, the seat of Chalmers Izett, Esq., whose lady had taken an early interest in my fortunes, which no circumstance has ever abated. I depended much on her advice and good taste; and had I attended more to her friendly remonstrances, it would have been much better for me. In the summer of 1814, having been seized with a severe cold while there, it was arranged that I should reside at Kinnaird House two or three weeks; and as Mrs. Izett insisted that I should not remain idle, she conducted me up stairs one morning, and introduced me into a little study, furnished with books and writing materials. "Now," said she, "I do not wish you to curtail your fishing hours, since you seem to delight so much in it, but whenever you have a spare hour, either evening or morning, you can retire to this place, either to read or write, as the humour suits you."—"Since you will set me down to write," said I, "you must choose a subject for me, for I have nothing in hand, and have thought of nothing."—"How can you be at a loss for a subject," returned she, "and that majestic river rolling beneath your eyes?"—"Well," said I, "though I consider myself exquisite at descriptions of nature, and mountain scenery in particular, yet I am afraid that a poem wholly descriptive will prove dull and heavy."—"You may make it the shorter," said she, "only write something to prevent your mind from rusting."

Upon this I determined immediately to write a poem descriptive of the river Tay, and after spending about two hours considering in what verse I should write it, I fixed on the stanza of Spenser. "That is the finest verse in the world," said I to myself; "it rolls off with such majesty and grandeur. What an effect it will have in the description of mountains, cataracts, and storms!"

I had also another motive for adopting it. I was fond of the Spenserian measure; but there was something in the best models that always offended my ear. It was owing to this. I thought it so formed, that every verse ought to be a structure of itself, resembling an arch, of which the two meeting rhymes in the middle should represent the key-stone, and on these all the strength and flow of the verse should rest. On beginning this poem, therefore, I had the vanity to believe that I was going to give the world a new specimen of this stanza in its proper harmony. It was under these feelings that my poem of "Mador of the Moor" was begun, and in a very short time completed: but I left out to the extent of one whole book of the descriptive part. There is no doubt whatever that my highest and most fortunate efforts in rhyme are contained in some of the descriptions of nature in that poem, and in the "Ode to Superstition" in the same measure.

In the same year, and immediately on finishing the above poem, I conceived a plan for writing a volume of romantic poems, to be entitled "Midsummer Night Dreams," and am sorry to this day that a friendly advice prevented me from accomplishing my design, for of all other subjects, there were none that suited the turns of my thoughts so well.

The first of these dreams that I wrote was "Connel of Dee," now published in the "Winter Evening Tales," and the second was "The Pilgrims of the Sun." It happened that a gentleman, Mr. James Park of Greenock, on whose literary taste I had great reliance, came to Edinburgh for a few weeks about this time; and, as we had been intimate acquaintances and correspondents for a number of years, I gave him a perusal of all my recent pieces in manuscript. His approbation of the "Pilgrims of the Sun" was so decided, and so unqualified, that he prevailed upon me to give up my design of the "Midsummer Night Dreams," and also that of publishing Mador, and to publish the former poem as an entire work by itself. This advice of my inestimable and regretted friend, though given in sincerity of heart, I am convinced was wrong; but I had faith in every one that commended any of my works, and laughed at those who did otherwise, thinking, and asserting, that they had not sufficient discernment. Among other wild and visionary subjects, "The Pilgrims of the Sun" would have done very well, and might at least have been judged one of

the best; but, as an entire poem by itself, it bears an impress of extravagance, and affords no relief from the story of a visionary existence. After my literary blunders and miscarriages are a few months old, I can view them with as much indifference, and laugh at them as heartily, as any of my neighbours. I have often felt, that Mary Lee reminded me of a beautiful country girl turned into an assembly in dishabille, "for a warld's wonder," whose beauties might be gazed at, but were sure to be derided.

There were some circumstances attending the publication of this poem which show the doings and the honour of the bookselling profession in a peculiar light. I called on my old friend, Mr. Constable, from whom I was very loath to part, and told him my design and views in publishing the poem. He received me with his usual kindness, and seemed to encourage the plan; but in the meantime, said he was busy, and that if I would call again on Saturday he would have time to think of it, and give me an answer. With the solicitude of a poor author, I was punctual to my hour on Saturday, and found Mr. Constable sitting at his confined desk up stairs, and alone, which was a rare incident. He saluted me, held out his hand without lifting his eyes from the paper, and then resuming his pen, continued writing. I read the backs of some of the books on his shelves, and then spoke of my new poem; but he would not deign to lift his eyes, or regard me. I tried to bring on a conversation by talking of the *Edinburgh Review;* but all to no purpose. "Now, the devil confound the fellow," thought I to myself, "he will sit there scribbling till we are interrupted by some one coming to talk to him of business, and then I shall lose my opportunity—perhaps it is what he wants! Hang him, if I thought he were not wanting my book I should be as saucy as he is!" At length he turned his back to the window, with his face to me, and addressed me in a long set speech, a thing I never heard him do before. It had a great deal of speciousness in it; but with regard to its purport, I leave the world to judge. I pledge myself, that in this short sketch of my literary life, as well as in the extended memoir, should that ever appear, to relate nothing but the downright truth. If any should feel that they have done or said wrong, I cannot help it.

"Hogg," said he, "you are a very extraordinary fellow! you are a man of very great genius, sir! I don't know if ever there was such another man born!" I looked down, and brushed my hat with my elbow; for what could any man answer to such an address? "Nay, it is all true, sir; I do not jest a word—I never knew such a genius in my life. I am told, that since the publication of "The Queen's Wake" last year, you have three new poems, all as long, and greatly superior to that, ready for publication. By G—, sir, you will write Scott, and Byron, and every one of them off the field."

"Let us alane o' your gibes, Maister Constable," said I, "and tell me at ance what ye're gaun to say about yon."

"I have been thinking seriously about your proposal, Hogg," said he; "and though you are the very sort of man whom I wish to encourage, yet I do not think the work would be best in my hands. I am so deeply engaged, my dear sir, in large and ponderous works, that a small light work has no good chance in my hands at all. For the sake of the authors, I have often taken such works in hand—among others, your friend Mr. Paterson's—and have been grieved that I had it not in my power to pay that minute attention to them, individually, that I wished to have done. The thing is impossible! And then the authors come fretting to me; nor will they believe that another bookseller can do much more for such works than I can. There is my friend, Mr. Miller, for instance—he has sold three times as many of *Discipline* as perhaps I could have done."—"No, no," said I, "I'll deal none with Mr. Miller: if you are not for the work yourself, I will find out one who will take it."—"I made the proposal in friendship," said he: "if you give the work to Miller I shall do all for it the same as if it were my own. I will publish it in all my catalogues, and in all my reviews and magazines, and I will send it abroad with all these to my agents in the country. I will be security for the price of it, should you and he deal; so that, in transferring it to Miller in place of me, you only secure for it two interests in place of one."

This was all so unobjectionable, that I could say nothing in opposition to it; so we agreed on the price at one word, which was, I think, to be eighty-six pounds for liberty to print one thousand copies. Mr. Miller was sent for, who complied with everything as implicitly as if he had been Mr. Constable's clerk, and without making a single observation. The bargain was fairly made out and concluded; the manuscript was put into Mr. Miller's hands, and I left Edinburgh, leaving him a written direction how to forward the proofs. Week passed after week, and no proofs arrived. I grew impatient, it having been stipulated that the work was to be published in two months, and wrote to Mr. Miller; but I received no answer. I then wrote to a friend to inquire the reason. He waited on Mr. Miller, he said, but received no satisfactory answer: "the truth of the matter," added he, "is this: Mr. Miller, I am privately informed, sent out your MS. among his blue-stockings for their verdict. They have condemned the poem as extravagant nonsense. Mr. Miller has rued his bargain, and will never publish the poem, unless he is sued at law." How far this information was correct I had no means of discovering; but it vexed me exceedingly, as I had mentioned the transaction to all my friends, and how much I was pleased at the connection. However, I waited patiently for two months, the time when it ought to have been published, and then I wrote Mr. Miller a note, desiring him to put my work forthwith to the press; the time being now elapsed; or, otherwise, to return me the manuscript. Mr. Miller returned me the poem with a polite note, as if no bargain had existed, and I thought it beneath me ever to mention the circumstance again, either to him or Mr. Constable. As I never understood the real secret of this transaction, neither do I know whom to blame. Mr. Miller seemed all along to be acting on the ground

of some secret arrangement with his neighbour, and it was perhaps by an arrangement of the same kind that the poem was given up. But I only relate what I know.

Some time after this, Mr. Blackwood introduced me to Mr. John Murray, the London bookseller, with whom I was quite delighted; and one night, after supping with him in Albany Street, I mentioned the transaction with Mr. Miller. He said Mr. Constable was to blame; for, as matters stood, he ought to have seen the bargain implemented; but, at all events, it should be no loss to me, for he was willing to take the poem according to Mr. Miller's bargain. There was nothing more said; we at once agreed, and exchanged letters on it; the work was put to press, and soon finished. But, alas for my unfortunate Pilgrim! The running copy was sent up to Mr. Murray in London; and that gentleman, finding his critical friends of the same opinion with Mr. Miller's blue-stockings, would not allow his name to go to the work. It was in vain that Mr. Blackwood urged that it was a work of genius, however faulty, and that it would be an honour for any bookseller to have his name to it. Mr. Murray had been informed by those on whose judgment he could rely, that it was the most wretched poem that ever was written.

Mr. Blackwood felt a delicacy in telling me this, and got a few friends to inform me of it in as delicate a way as possible. I could not, however, conceal my feelings, and maintained that the poem was a good one. Mr. Grieve checked me, by saying it was impossible that I could be a better judge than both the literary people of Scotland and England—that they could have no interest in condemning the poem; and after what had happened, it was vain to augur any good of it. I said it would be long ere any of those persons who had condemned it could write one like it; and I was obliged to please myself with this fancy, and put up with the affront.

The poem came out, and was rather well received. I never met with any person, who really had read it, that did not like the piece; the reviewers praised it: and the *Eclectic*, in particular, gave it the highest commendation I ever saw bestowed on a work of genius. It was reprinted in two different towns in America, and ten thousand copies of it sold in that country. Mr. Murray very honourably paid me the price agreed on three months before it was due; but the work sold heavily here, and neither my booksellers nor I have proposed a second edition. The trade were all, except Mr. Blackwood, set against it, in defence of their own good taste. It is indeed a faulty poem, but I think no shame of it; neither, I trust, will any of my friends when I am no more.

My next literary adventure was the most extravagant of any. I took it into my head that I would collect a poem from every living author in Britain, and publish them in a neat and elegant volume, by which I calculated I might make my fortune. I either applied personally, or by letter, to Southey, Wilson, Wordsworth, Lloyd, Morehead, Pringle, Paterson, and several others; all of whom sent me very ingenious and beautiful poems. Wordsworth afterwards reclaimed his; and although Lord Byron and Rogers both promised, neither of them ever performed. I believe they intended it, but some other concerns of deeper moment interfered. In one of Lord Byron's letters he told me he was busy inditing a poem for me, and assured me that "he would appear in my work in his best breeks." That poem was "Lara," and who it was that influenced him to detain it from me, I do not know. I have heard a report of one; but the deed was so ungenerous, I cannot believe it.

I may here mention, by way of advertising, that I have lost all Lord Byron's letters to me, on which I put a very high value; and which I know to have been stolen from me by some one or other of my tourist visitors, for I was so proud of these letters, that I would always be showing them to everybody. It was exceedingly unkind, particularly as they never can be of use to any other person, for they have been so often and so eagerly read by many of my friends, that any single sentence out of any one of them could easily be detected. I had five letters of his of two sheets each, and one of three. They were indeed queer *harumscarum letters*, about women, and poetry, mountains, and authors, and blue-stockings; and what he sat down to write about was generally put in the postscript. They were all, however, extremely kind, save one, which was rather a satirical, bitter letter. I had been joking him about his approaching marriage, and assuring him he was going to get himself into a confounded scrape. I wished she might prove both a good *mill* and a *bank* to him; but I much doubted they would not be such as he was calculating on. I think he felt that I was using too much freedom with him.

The last letter that I received from him was shortly after the birth of his daughter Ada. In it he breathed the most tender affection both for the mother and child. How much I was astounded by the news that soon followed that!—Peace be to his manes! He was a great man; and I do not think that one on earth appreciated his gigantic genius so highly as I did. He sent me previous to that period all his poems as they were printed.

But to return to my publication: Mr. Walter Scott absolutely refused to furnish me with even one verse, which I took exceedingly ill, as it frustrated my whole plan. What occasioned it I do not know, as I accounted myself certain of his support from the beginning, and had never asked anything of him in all my life that he refused. It was in vain that I represented that I had done as much for him, and would do ten times more if he required it. He remained firm in his denial, which I thought very hard; so I left him in high dudgeon, sent him a very abusive letter, and would not speak to him again for many a day. I could not even endure to see him at a distance, I felt so degraded by the refusal; and I was, at that time, more disgusted with all mankind than I had ever been before, or have ever been since.

I began, with a heavy heart, to look over the pieces I had received, and lost all hope of the success of my project. They were, indeed, all very well; but I did not see that they possessed such merit as could give

celebrity to any work; and after considering them well, I fancied that I could write a better poem than any that had been sent or would be sent to me, and this so completely in the style of each poet, that it should not be known but for his own production. It was this conceit that suggested to me the idea of "The Poetic Mirror, or Living Bards of Britain." I set to work with great glee, as the fancy had struck me, and in a few days I finished my imitations of Wordsworth and Lord Byron. Like a fool, I admired the latter poem most, and contrived to get a large literary party together, on pretence, as I said, of giving them a literary treat. I had got the poem transcribed, and gave it to Mr. Ballantyne to read, who did it ample justice. Indeed, he read it with extraordinary effect; so much so, that I was astonished at the poem myself, and before it was half done all pronounced it Byron's. Every one was deceived except Mr. Ballantyne, who was not to be imposed on in that way; but he kept the secret until we got to the Bridge, and then he told me his mind.

The "Poetic Mirror" was completely an off-hand production. I wrote it all in three weeks, except a very small proportion; and in less than three months it was submitted to the public. The second poem in the volume, namely, the epistle to R—— S——, the most beautiful and ingenious piece in the work, is not mine. It was written by Mr. Thomas Pringle, and was not meant as an imitation of Mr. Scott's manner at all. There is likewise another small secret connected with that work, which I am not yet at liberty to unfold, but which the ingenious may perhaps discover. The first edition was sold in six weeks, and another of seven hundred and fifty copies has since been sold. I do not set any particular value on any poem in the work by myself, except the "Gude Greye Katte," which was written as a caricature of "The Pilgrims of the Sun," the "Witch of Fife," and some others of my fairy ballads. It is greatly superior to any of them. I have also been told that in England, one of the imitations of Wordsworth's "Excursion" has been deemed excellent.

The year following I published two volumes of Tragedies: to these I affixed the title of "Dramatic Tales, by the Author of the Poetic Mirror." I forgot, however, to mention, that the "Poetic Mirror" was published anonymously, and I was led to think that, had the imitations of Wordsworth been less a caricature, the work might have passed, for a season at least, as the genuine productions of the authors themselves, whose names were prefixed to the several poems. I was strongly urged by some friends, previous to the publication of these plays, to try "Sir Anthony Moore" on the stage; and once, at the suggestions of Sir Walter Scott, I consented to submit it to the players, through Mr. Ballantyne. But, by a trivial accident, the matter was delayed till I got time to consider of it; and then I shrunk from the idea of intrusting my character as a poet in the hands of every bungling and absurd actor, who, if dissatisfied with his part, had the power of raising as much disapprobation as might damn the whole piece. Consequently, my first attempts in the drama have never been offered for representation. "Sir Anthony Moore" is the least original, and the least poetical piece of the whole, and I trust it will never be acted while I live; but, if at any period it should be brought forward, and one able performer appear in the character of Old Cecil, and another in that of Caroline, I may venture my credit and judgment as an author, that it will prove successful. The pastoral drama of "All Hallow-Eve" was written at the suggestion of the Reverend Robert Morehead. "The Profligate Princess" is a modification of my first play; "The Hunting of Badlewe," printed by Goldie; and the fragment of "The Haunted Glen" was written off-hand, to make the second volume of an equal extent with the first.

The small degree of interest that these dramas excited in the world, finished my dramatic and poetical career. I had adopted a resolution of writing a drama every year as long as I lived, hoping to make myself perfect by degrees, as a man does in his calling, by serving an apprenticeship; but the failure of those to excite notice fully convinced me, that either this was not the age to appreciate the qualities of dramatic composition, or that I was not possessed of the talents fitting me for such an undertaking: and so I gave up the ambitious design.

Before this period, all the poems that I had published had been begun and written by chance and at random, without any previous design. I had at that time commenced an epic poem on a regular plan, and I finished two books of it, pluming myself that it was to prove my greatest work. But seeing that the poetical part of these dramas excited no interest in the public, I felt conscious that no poetry I should ever be able to write would do so; or if it did, the success would hinge upon some casualty, on which it did not behove me to rely. So from that day to this, save now and then an idle song to beguile a leisure hour, I determined to write no more poetry.

Several years subsequent to this, at the earnest entreaties of some literary friends, I once more set to work and finished the epic, which I entitled "Queen Hynde," in a time shorter than any person would believe. I submitted it first to Sir Walter Scott, who gave it his approbation in the most unqualified terms; so the work was put to press with every prospect of high success. I sold an edition of one thousand copies to Longman and Co.; but Mr. Blackwood, who had been chiefly instrumental in urging me to finish the poem, claimed the half of the edition, and got it. But it proved to him like the Highlandman's character—"he would have been as better without it." That malicious *deevil*, Jerdan, first took it up and damned it with faint praise. The rest of the reviewers followed in his wake, so that, in short, the work sold heavily and proved rather a failure.

It is said the multitude never are wrong, but, in this instance, I must take Mr. Wordsworth's plan, and maintain that they *were* wrong. I need not say how grievously I was disappointed, as what unsuccessful candidate for immortal fame is not? But it would have been well could I have refrained from exposing myself. I was invited to a public dinner given by a great number of young friends, a sort of worshippers of mine

(for I have a number of those in Scotland). It was to congratulate me on my new work, and drink success to it. The president made a speech, in which after some laudatory remarks on the new poem, he boldly and broadly asserted that it was much inferior to their beloved "Queen's Wake." I was indignantly wroth, denying his assertion both in principle and position, and maintained not only that it was infinitely superior to the "Queen's Wake," but I offered to bet the price of the edition with any or all of them that it was the best epic poem that ever had been produced in Scotland. None of them would take the bet, but as few backed me. I will however stake my credit on "Queen Hynde." It was unfortunate that the plot should have been laid in an age so early that we have no interest in it.

From the time I gave up *The Spy*, I had been planning with my friends to commence the publication of a magazine on a new plan; but, for several years we only conversed about the utility of such a work, without doing anything farther. At length, among others, I chanced to mention it to Mr. Thomas Pringle; when I found that he and his friends had a plan in contemplation of the same kind. We agreed to join our efforts, and try to set it agoing; but, as I declined the editorship on account of residing mostly on my farm at a distance from town, it became a puzzling question who was the best qualified among our friends for that undertaking. We at length fixed on Mr. Gray as the fittest person for the principal department, and I mentioned the plan to Mr. Blackwood, who, to my astonishment, I found had likewise long been cherishing a plan of the same kind. He said he knew nothing about Pringle, and always had his eye on me as a principal assistant; but he would not begin the undertaking until he saw he could do it with effect. Finding him, however, disposed to encourage such a work, Pringle, at my suggestion, made out a plan in writing, with a list of his supporters, and sent it in a letter to me. I inclosed it in another, and sent it to Mr. Blackwood; and not long after that period Pringle and he came to an arrangement about commencing the work, while I was in the country. Thus I had the honour of being the beginner, and almost sole instigator of that celebrated work, *Blackwood's Magazine;* but from the time I heard that Pringle had taken in Cleghorn as a partner I declined all connection with it, farther than as an occasional contributor. I told him the connection would not likely last for a year, and insisted that he should break it at once; but to this proposal he would in nowise listen. As I had predicted, so it fell out, and much sooner than might have been expected. In the fourth month after the commencement of that work, I received a letter from Mr. Blackwood, soliciting my return to Edinburgh; and when I arrived there, I found that he and his two redoubted editors had gone to loggerheads, and instead of arguing the matter face to face, they were corresponding together at the rate of about a sheet an hour. Viewing this as a ridiculous mode of proceeding, I brought about two meetings between Mr. Blackwood and Mr. Pringle, and endeavoured all that I could to bring them to a right understanding about the matter. A reconciliation was effected at that time, and I returned again to the country. Soon, however, I heard that the flames of controversy, and proud opposition, had broken out between the parties with greater fury than ever; and shortly after, that they had finally separated, and the two champions gone over and enlisted under the banners of Mr. Constable, having left Mr. Blackwood to shift for himself, and carried over, as they pretended, their right to the magazine, with all their subscribers and contributors to the other side.

I received letters from both parties. I loved Pringle, and would gladly have assisted him had it been in my power; but, after balancing fairly the two sides, I thought Mr. Blackwood more sinned against than sinning, and that the two editors had been endeavouring to bind him to a plan which could not possibly succeed; so, on considering his disinterested friendship for me, manifested in several strong instances, I stuck to him, expecting excellent sport in the various exertions and manœuvres of the two parties for the superiority.

I know not what wicked genius put it into my head, but it was then, in an evil hour, when I had determined on the side I was to espouse, that I wrote the "Chaldee Manuscript," and transmitted it to Mr. Blackwood from Yarrow. On first reading it, he never thought of publishing it; but some of the rascals to whom he showed it, after laughing at it by their own accounts till they were sick, persuaded him, nay almost forced him, to insert it; for some of them went so far as to tell him, that if he did not admit that inimitable article, they would never speak to him again so long as they lived. Needless however it is now to deny, that they interlarded it with a good deal of deevilry of their own, which I had never thought of; and one who had a principal hand in these alterations has never yet been named as an aggressor.

Certain of my literary associates call me *The Chaldee Shepherd*, and pretend to sneer at my assumption of being the author of that celebrated article. Certes, they have long ago persuaded the country that I was not. Luckily, however, I have preserved the original proof slips and three of Mr. Blackwood's letters relating to the article. These proofs show exactly what part was mine, which, if I remember aright (for I write this in London), consists of the first two chapters, part of the third, and part of the last. The rest was said to have been made up conjointly in full divan. I do not know, but I always suspected Lockhart of a heavy responsibility there.

I declare I never once dreamed of giving anybody offence by that droll article, nor did I ever think of keeping it a secret either from Mr. Constable or Mr. Pringle: so far from that, I am sure, had I been in town, I would have shown the manuscript to the latter before publication. I meant it as a sly history of the transaction, and the great literary battle that was to be fought. All that I expected was a little retaliation of the same kind in the opposing magazine; and when I received letter after letter, informing me what a dreadful flame it had raised in Edinburgh, I could not be brought to believe that it was not a joke. I am not certain but that I confessed the matter to Mr. George Thomson, in the course of our correspondence,

before I was aware of its importance. No one ever suspected me as the author. When I came to town, every one made his remarks, and pronounced his anathemas upon it without any reserve, in my hearing, which afforded me much amusement. Still I could not help viewing the whole as a farce, or something unreal and deceptive; and I am sure I never laughed so much in my life as at the rage in which I found so many people.

That same year I published "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," and other Tales, in two volumes. I suffered unjustly in the eyes of the world with regard to that tale, which was looked on as an imitation of the tale of "Old Mortality," and a counterpart to that; whereas it was written long ere the tale of "Old Mortality" was heard of, and I well remember my chagrin on finding the ground, which I thought clear, preoccupied before I could appear publicly on it, and that by such a redoubted champion. It was wholly owing to Mr. Blackwood that this tale was not published a year sooner, which would effectually have freed me from the stigma of being an imitator, and brought in the author of the "Tales of my Landlord" as an imitator of me. That was the only ill turn that ever Mr. Blackwood did me; and it ought to be a warning to authors never to intrust booksellers with their manuscripts.

I mentioned to Mr. Blackwood that I had two tales I wished to publish, and at his request I gave him a reading of the manuscript. One of them was "The Brownie," which, I believe, was not quite finished. He approved of it, but with "The Bridal of Polmood" he would have nothing to do. Of course my manuscripts were returned, and I had nothing else for it but to retire to the country, and there begin and write two other tales in place of the one rejected. "The Bridal of Polmood," however, was published from the same copy, and without the alteration of a word, and has been acknowledged by all who have read it as the most finished and best written tale that I ever produced. Mr. Blackwood himself must be sensible of this fact, and also, that in preventing its being published along with "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," he did an injury both to himself and me. As a further proof how little booksellers are to be trusted, he likewise wished to prevent the insertion of "The Wool-Gatherer," which has been a universal favourite; but I know the source from whence it proceeded. I would never object trusting a bookseller were he a man of any taste; for unless he wishes to reject an author altogether, he can have no interest in asserting what he does not think. But the plague is, they *never read works themselves*, but give them to their minions, with whom there never fails to lurk a literary jealousy; and whose suggestions may uniformly be regarded as anything but the truth. For my own part, I know that I have always been looked on by the learned part of the community as an intruder in the paths of literature, and every opprobrium has been thrown on me from that quarter. The truth is, that I am so. The walks of learning are occupied by a powerful aristocracy, who deem that province their own peculiar right; else, what would avail all their dear-bought collegiate honours and degrees? No wonder that they should view an intruder, from the humble and depised ranks of the community, with a jealous and indignant eye, and impede his progress by every means in their power.

I was unlucky therefore in the publication of my first novel, and what impeded me still further, was the publication of "Old Mortality;" for, having made the redoubted Burley the hero of my tale, I was obliged to go over it again, and alter all the traits in the character of the principal personage, substituting John Brown of Caldwell, for John Balfour of Burley, greatly to the detriment of my story. I tried also to take out Clavers, but I found this impossible. A better instance could not be given of the good luck attached to one person, and the bad luck which attended the efforts of another.

I observe that in the extended MS. I had detailed all the proceedings of a club, the most ridiculous perhaps that ever was established in any city, and, owing to some particular circumstances, I cannot refrain from mentioning them here. This club was established one night in a frolic, at a jovial dinner party, in the house of a young lawyer, now of some celebrity at the bar, and was christened *The Right and Wrong Club.* The chief principle of the club was, that whatever any of its members should assert, the whole were bound to support the same, whether *right or wrong.* We were so delighted with the novelty of the idea, that we agreed to meet the next day at Oman's Hotel, and celebrate its anniversary. We were dull and heavy when we met, but did not part so. We dined at five, and separated at two in the morning, before which time the club had risen greatly in our estimation; so we agreed to meet next day, and every successive day for five or six weeks, and during all that time our hours of sitting continued the same. No constitutions on earth could stand this. Had our meetings been restricted to once a month, or even once a week, the club might have continued to this day, and would have been a source of much pleasure and entertainment to the members; but to meet daily was out of the question. The result was, that several of the members got quite deranged, and I drank myself into an inflammatory fever. The madness of the members proved no bar to the hilarity of the society; on the contrary, it seemed to add a great deal of zest to it, as a thing quite in character. An inflammatory fever, however, sounded rather strange in the ears of the joyous group, and threw a damp on their spirits. They continued their meetings for some days longer, and regularly sent a deputation at five o'clock to inquire after my health, and I was sometimes favoured with a call from one or more of the members, between two and three in the morning, when they separated. The mornings after such visits I was almost sure to have to provide new knockers and bell-handles for all the people on the stair. Finding, however, that I still grew worse, they had the generosity to discontinue their sittings, and to declare that they would not meet again until their poet was able to join them; and if that should never happen, they would never meet again. This motion (which was made by a newly-

initiated member, Mr. John Ballantyne), was hailed with shouts of approbation, and from that hour to this *The Right and Wrong Club* never more met. It was high time that it should have been given up, for one term at least. It proved a dear club to me. I was three weeks confined to my bed, and if it had not been for Dr. Saunders, I believe I should have died. Its effect turned out better with regard to several of the other members, as it produced a number of happy marriages. During the period of high excitation, the lads wrote flaming love-letters to young ladies of their acquaintance, containing certain proffers, which, with returning reflection, they found they could not with propriety retract. It made some of them do the wisest acts that ever they did in their lives.

This brings me to an anecdote which I must relate, though with little credit to myself; one that I never call to mind without its exciting feelings of respect, admiration, and gratitude. I formerly mentioned that I had quarrelled with Sir Walter Scott. It is true, I had all the quarrel on my own side: no matter for that; I was highly offended, exceedingly angry, and shunned all communications with him for a twelvemonth. He heard that I was ill, and that my trouble had assumed a dangerous aspect. Every day, on his return from the Parliament House, he called at Messrs. Grieve and Scott's to inquire after my health, with much friendly solicitude; and this, too, after I had renounced his friendship, and told him that I held both it and his literary talents in contempt! One day in particular, he took Mr. Grieve aside, and asked him if I had proper attendants and an able physician. Mr. Grieve assured him that I was carefully attended, and had the skill of a professional gentleman in whom I had the most implicit confidence. "I would fain have called," said he, "but I knew not how I would be received. I request, however, that he may have every proper attendance, and want for nothing that can contribute to the restoration of his health. And in particular, I have to request that you will let no pecuniary consideration whatever prevent his having the best medical advice in Edinburgh, for I shall see it paid. Poor Hogg! I would not for all that I am worth in the world that anything serious should befall him."

As Mr. Grieve had been enjoined, he never mentioned this circumstance to me. I accidentally, however, came to the knowledge of it some months afterwards. I then questioned him as to the truth of it, when he told me it all, very much affected. I went straight home, and wrote an apology to Sir Walter, which was heartily received, and he invited me to breakfast next morning, adding, that he was longing much to see me. The same day, as we were walking round St. Andrew's Square, I endeavoured to make the cause of our difference the subject of conversation, but he eluded it. I tried it again some days afterwards, sitting in his study, but he again parried it with equal dexterity; so that I have been left to conjecture what could be his motive in refusing so peremptorily the trifle that I had asked of him. I knew him too well to have the least suspicion that there could be any selfish or unfriendly feeling in the determination that he adopted, and I can account for it in no other way, than by supposing that he thought it mean in me to attempt either to acquire gain, or a name, by the efforts of other men; and that it was much more honourable, to use a proverb of his own, "that every herring should hang by its own head."

Mr. Wilson once drove me also into an ungovernable rage, by turning a long and elaborate poem of mine, on "The Field of Waterloo," into ridicule, on learning which I sent him a letter, which I thought was a tickler. There was scarcely an abusive epithet in our language that I did not call him by. My letter, however, had not the designed effect: the opprobious names proved only a source of amusement to Wilson, and he sent me a letter of explanation and apology, which knit my heart closer to him than ever. My friends in general have been of opinion that he has amused himself and the public too often at my expense; but, except in one instance, which terminated very ill for me, and in which I had no more concern than the man in the moon, I never discerned any evil design on his part, and thought it all excellent sport. At the same time, I must acknowledge, that it was using too much freedom with any author, to print his name in full, to poems, letters, and essays, which he himself never saw. I do not say that he has done this; but either he or some one else has done it many a time.

My next literary undertaking was the "Jacobite Relics of Scotland." Of this work it is proper to mention, that it was first proposed in the Highland Society of London, his royal highness the Duke of Sussex being in the chair; yet, for all that, the native Highlanders were so jealous of a Sassenach coming plodding among them, gathering up their rebellious scraps, that, had it not been for the influence of the ladies over the peasantry of their respective districts, I could never have succeeded.

I published the first volume in 1819, reserving the second volume until the following year, in the hope of collecting every remnant that was worthy of preservation. The task was exceedingly troublesome, but far from being unmixed with pleasure. The jealousy of the Highlanders was amusing beyond conception. I shall never forget with what sly and disdainful looks Donald would eye me, when I told him I was gathering up old songs. And then he would say, "Ohon, man, you surely haif had very less to do at home; and so you want to get some of the songs of the poor repellioners from me; and then you will give me up to King Shorge to be hanged! Hoo, no!—that will never do."

In the interim between the publication of the first and second volumes, I collected and arranged for publication "The Winter Evening Tales," which were published by Oliver and Boyd in 1820, in two volumes, closely printed. The greater part of these tales was written in early life, when I was a shepherd among the mountains, and on looking them over, I saw well enough that there was a blunt rusticity about them; but I liked them the better for it, and altered nothing. To me they appeared not only more characteristic of the life that I then led, but also of the manners that I was describing. As to the indeli-

cacies hinted at by some reviewers, I do declare that such a thought never entered into my mind, so that the public are indebted for these indelicacies to the acuteness of the discoverers. Woe be to that reader who goes over a simple and interesting tale fishing for indelicacies, without calculating on what is natural for the characters with whom he is conversing; a practice, however, too common among people of the present age, especially if the author be not a blue stocking. All that I can say for myself in general is, that I am certain I never intentionally meant ill, and that I hope to be forgiven, both by God and man, for every line that I have written injurious to the cause of religion, of virtue, or of good manners. On the other hand, I am so ignorant of the world, that it can scarcely be expected I should steer clear of all inadvertencies.

The following list of works may appear trifling in the eyes of some, but when it is considered that they have been produced by a man almost devoid of education, and principally, in his early days, debarred from every advantage in life, and possessed only of a quick eye in observing the operations of nature, it is certainly a sufficient excuse for inserting them here, more especially as some of them run a great risk of being lost. I am proud of it myself, and I do not deny it; nor is there one in the list, for the contents of which I have any reason to blush, when all things are taken into account. I was forty years of age before I wrote the "Queen's Wake." That poem was published in 1813; so that in that and the next six years I wrote and published—

	Vols.
The Queen's Wake,	1
Pilgrims of the Sun,	1
The Hunting of Badlewe,	1
Mador of the Moor,	1
Poetic Mirror,	1
Dramatic Tales,	2
Brownie of Bodsbeck,	2
Winter Evening Tales,	2
Sacred Melodies,	1
Border Garland, No. I.,	1
Jacobite Relics of Scotland,	2

Making fifteen volumes in seven years, besides many articles in periodical works. To these may now be added—

	Vols.
The Spy,	1
Queen Hynde,	1
The Three Perils of Man,	3
The Three Perils of Women,	3
Confessions of a Fanatic,	1
The Shepherd's Calendar,	2
A Selection of Songs,	1
The Queer Book,	1
The Royal Jubilee,	1
The Mountain Bard,	1
The Forest Minstrel,	1

Making in all about thirty volumes, which, if the quality were at all proportioned to the quantity, are enough for any man's life.

I omitted to mention formerly, that in 1815, I was applied to by a celebrated composer of music, in the name of a certain company in London, to supply verses suiting some ancient Hebrew melodies, selected in the synagogues of Germany. I proffered to furnish them at a guinea a stanza, which was agreed to at once, and I furnished verses to them all. The work was published in a splendid style, price one guinea; but it was a hoax upon me, for I was never paid a farthing.

In this short memoir, which is composed of extracts from a larger detail, I have confined myself to such anecdotes only as relate to my progress as a writer, and these I intend to continue from year to year as long as I live. There is much that I have written which cannot as yet appear; for the literary men of Scotland, my contemporaries, may change their characters, so as to forfeit the estimate at which I have set them. Of my own productions, I have endeavoured to give an opinion with perfect candour; and, although the partiality of an author may be too apparent in the preceding pages, yet I trust every generous heart will excuse, and make due allowance for the failing.

REMINISCENCES OF FORMER DAYS.

I must now proceed with my reminiscences at random, as from the time the last journal was finished and published I ceased keeping any notes. From 1809 until 1814 I resided in Edinburgh, having no home or place of retirement in my native district of Ettrick Forest, a want which I felt grievously in summer. But in the course of the last-mentioned year I received a letter from the late Duke Charles of Buccleugh, by the hands of his chamberlain, presenting me with the small farm of Altrive Lake, in the wilds of Yarrow. The boon was quite unsolicited and unexpected, and never was a more welcome one conferred on an unfortunate wight, as it gave me once more a habitation among my native moors and streams, where each face was that of a friend, and each house was a home, as well as a residence for life to my aged father.

The letter was couched in the kindest terms, and informed me that I had long had a secret and sincere friend whom I knew not of, in his late Duchess, who had in her lifetime solicited such a residence for me. In the letter he said, "The rent shall be nominal;" but it has not even been nominal, for such a thing as rent has never once been mentioned. Subsequently to that period I was a frequent guest at his Grace's table; and, as he placed me always next him, on his right hand, I enjoyed a good share of his conversation, and I must say of my benefactor, that I have never met with any man whom I deemed his equal. There is no doubt that he was beloved and esteemed, not only by his family and friends, but by all who could appreciate merit; yet strange to say, Duke Charles was not popular among his tenantry. This was solely owing to the change of times, over which no nobleman can have any control, and which it is equally impossible for him to redress; for a more considerate, benevolent, and judicious gentleman I never saw. It is natural to suppose that I loved him, and felt grateful towards him; but exclusive of all feelings of *that* nature, if I

am any judge of mankind, Duke Charles had every qualification both of heart and mind, which ought to endear a nobleman to high and low, rich and poor. From the time of his beloved partner's death his spirits began to droop; and, though for the sake of his family, he made many efforts to keep them up, the energy that formerly had supported them was broken, and the gnawings of a disconsolate heart brought him to an untimely grave. Blessed be the memory of my two noble and only benefactors! they were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were but shortly divided.

I then began and built a handsome cottage on my new farm, and forthwith made it my head-quarters. But not content with this, having married in 1820 Miss Margaret Phillips, youngest daughter of Mr Phillips, late of Longbridge-moor, in Annandale, and finding that I had then in the hands of Mr. Murray, Mr. Blackwood, Messrs. Oliver and Boyd, and Messrs. Longman and Co., debts due, or that would soon be due, to the amount of a thousand pounds, I determined once more to farm on a larger scale, and expressed my wish to the Right Honourable Lord Montague, head trustee on his nephew's domains. His lordship readily offered me the farm of Mount-Benger, which adjoined my own. At first I determined not to accept of it, as it had ruined two well-qualified farmers in the preceding six years; but was persuaded at last by some neighbours, in opposition to my own judgment, to accept of it, on the plea that the farmers on the Buccleugh estate were never suffered to be great losers, and that at all events, if I could not *make* the rent, I could write for it. So accordingly I took a lease of the farm for nine years.

I called in my debts, which were all readily paid, and amounted to within a few pounds of one thousand; but at that period the sum was quite inadequate, the prices of ewes bordering on thirty shillings per head. The farm required stocking to the amount of one thousand sheep, twenty cows, five horses, farming utensils of all sorts, crop, manure, and moreover, draining, fencing, and building, so that I soon found I had not half enough of money; and though I realized by writing, in the course of the next two years, seven hundred and fifty pounds, besides smaller sums paid in cash, yet I got into difficulties at the very first, out of which I could never redeem myself till the end of the lease, at which time live stock of all kinds having declined one half in value, the speculation left me once more without a sixpence in the world—and at the age of sixty it is fully late enough to begin it anew.

It will be consolatory however to my friends to be assured that none of these reverses ever preyed in the smallest degree on my spirits. As long as I did all for the best, and was conscious that no man could ever accuse me of dishonesty, I laughed at the futility of my own calculations, and let my earnings go as they came, amid contentment and happiness, determined to make more money as soon as possible, although it should go the same way.

One may think, on reading over this memoir, that I must have worn out a life of misery and wretchedness; but the case has been quite the reverse. I never knew either man or woman who has been so uniformly happy as I have been; which has been partly owing to a good constitution, and partly from the conviction that a heavenly gift, conferring the powers of immortal song, was inherent in my soul. Indeed so uniformly smooth and happy has my married life been, that on a retrospect I cannot distinguish one part from another, save by some remarkably good days of fishing, shooting, and curling on the ice. Those who desire to peruse my youthful love adventures will find some of the best of them in those of "George Cochrane."

Now, as I think the best way of writing these bygone reminiscences is to finish the subject one is on, before beginning another, I must revert to several circumstances of importance to nobody but myself, In 1822, perceiving that I was likely to run short of money, I began and finished in the course of a few months, "The Three Perils of Man, viz. War, Women, and Witchcraft!" Lord preserve us! what a medley I made of it! for I never in my life rewrote a page of prose; and being impatient to get hold of some of Messrs. Longman and Co.'s money or their bills, which were the same, I dashed on, and mixed up with what might have been made one of the best historical tales our country ever produced, such a mass of diablerie as retarded the main story, and rendered the whole perfectly ludicrous. But the worst thing of all effected by this novel, or at least by the novel part of an authentic tale, was its influencing the ingenious Allan Cunningham to follow up the idea, and improve the subject; whereas, he made matters rather worse. I received one hundred and fifty pounds for the edition of one thousand copies as soon as it was put to press. The house never manifested the least suspicion of me, more than if I had been one of their own firm.

The next year I produced "The Three Perils of Women," also in three volumes, and received the same price likewise, in bills, as soon as it was put to press. There is a good deal of pathos and absurdity in both the tales of this latter work; but I was all this while writing as if in desperation, and see matters now in a different light.

The next year, 1824, I published "The Confessions of a Fanatic;" but it being a story replete with horrors, after I had written it I durst not venture to put my name to it: so it was published anonymously, and of course did not sell very well—so at least I believe, for I do not remember ever receiving anything for it, and I am sure if there had been a reversion I should have had a moiety. However, I never asked anything; so on that point there was no misunderstanding.

But the same year I offered them two volumes 12mo of "The Lives of Eminent Men;" to which they answered, "that my last publication had been found fault with in some very material points, and they begged leave to decline publishing the present one until they consulted some other persons with regard to its merits." Oho! thinks I, since my favourite publishers thus think proper to take two thousand volumes for nothing ("Queen Hynde" and the "Confessions of a Fanatic"), and then refuse the third, it is

time to give them up; so I never wrote another letter to that house.

I confess that there was a good deal of wrangling between Mr. Blackwood and me with regard to a hundred pound bill of Messrs. Longman and Co.'s, advanced on the credit of these works. When Mr. Blackwood came to be a sharer in them, and to find that he was likely to be a loser of that sum, or a great part of it, he caused me to make over a bill to him of the same amount, which he afterwards charged me with, and deducted from our subsequent transactions:—so that, as far as ever I could be made to understand the matter, after many letters and arguments, I never received into my own hand one penny for these two works. I do not accuse Mr. Blackwood of dishonesty; on the contrary, with all his faults, I never saw anything but honour and integrity about him. But this was the fact. Messrs. Longman & Co. advanced me one hundred pounds on the credit of one or both of the works: I drew the money for the note, or rather I believe Mr. Blackwood drew it out of the bank for me. But he compelled me, whether I would or not, to grant him my promissory note for the same sum, and I was to have a moiety of the proceeds from both houses. The account was carried on against me till finally obliterated; but the proceeds I never heard of; and yet, on coming to London, I find that Messrs. Longman and Co. have not a copy of either of the works, nor have had any for a number of years. It is probable that they may have sold them off at a trade sale, and at a very cheap rate too; but half of the edition was mine, and they ought to have consulted me, or at least informed me of the transaction. It was because I had an implicit confidence in Blackwood's honour that I signed the bill, though I told him I could not comprehend it. The whole of that trifling business has to this day continued a complete mystery to me. I have told the plain truth, and if any of the parties can explain it away I shall be obliged to them. If the money should ever by any chance drop in, "better late than never" will be my salutation.

In 1822 I bargained with Constable and Co. for an edition of my best poems in four volumes, for which they were to pay me two hundred pounds. It was with Mr. Robert Cadell that I made the bargain. He was always a near and intimate friend of mine, but one whom at our club we reckoned a perfect Nabal; and in all our social parties we were wont to gibe him about his niggardly hardness, which he never took the least amiss. He offered not the smallest objection to the conditions; but he made a reserve (as I needed a bill at a short date) that if there were not above five hundred copies of the work sold when the bill became due, he was entitled to a renewal of the bill for six months. Accordingly, I attended the day before the bill became due and offered to accept of the renewal. Cadell took up the missive, read it over, and standing upright, he lifted his large eyes toward the cornice, his pale face looking more cadaverous than usual. He then conversed shortly with Mr. Fyffe, his cashier, studied the letter again for a good while, and then said, "And what are you going to do with the money, Hogg, that you draw out of the bank to-day on our bill?"

"I am gaun to bring it to you ye see," says I, "to lift the other bill wi'. An' I'll pay the four per centage out o' my ain pouch wi' great cheerfulness, for the good I hae gottin o' the siller."

"You have got full payment for the edition, have you?"

"Yes, I hae. Think ye I'm gaun to deny that?"

"And what did you do with it?"

"Od man, ye're no blate to speer. But the truth is that I gae it away in rent."

"Then you have no chance ever to get it again?"

"Diel a grain."

"And do you consider that by this transaction you will change the sterling value that is already in your hand for our paper?"

"Ay, an' excepting the bit interest they are the very same to me."

"But I won't trust you to make the experiment. There's your missive. Keep hold of what you have, and I'll pay the bill when it is presented."

"There are some waur chaps than Cadell, for as sairly as I hae misca'd him whiles," thought I, as I went down stairs.

I have recorded every word that passed here, for I thought very highly of his conduct at the time; and when I saw what soon after followed, I thought ten times more of it, and never reported Cadell as a scrub again. Sir Walter Scott at the same time sent me a credit order on his banker for a hundred pounds, for fear of any embarrassment; so that altogether I find I lost upwards of two thousand pounds on Mount Benger lease—a respectable sum for an old shepherd to throw away.

Having been so much discouraged by the failure of "Queen Hynde," I gave up all thoughts of ever writing another long poem, but continued for six years to write fairy tales, ghost stories, songs, and poems for periodicals of every description, sometimes receiving liberal payment, and sometimes none, just as the editor or proprietor felt disposed. It will be but justice to give a list of such as pay and such as do not, and their several grades, which I may add to this by and by.

In 1829 Bailie Blackwood published a selection of my best songs that could be recovered, with notes, consisting of about one hundred and forty. The work was exceedingly well received, and has paid me a good sum already. In the following year, that is the year before last, the bailie also ventured to *print* one thousand copies of a miscellaneous work of mine, which, for fear of that great bugbear REFORM, he has never dared to publish, and I am convinced never will.

I have had many dealings with that gentleman, and have been often obliged to him, and yet I think he has been as much obliged to me, perhaps a good deal more, and I really believe in my heart that he is as much disposed to be friendly to me as to any man; but there is another principle that circumscribes that feeling in all men, and into very narrow limits in some. It is always painful to part with one who

has been a benefactor even on a small scale, but there are some things that no independent heart can bear. The great fault of Blackwood is, that he regards no man's temper or disposition; but the more he can provoke an author by insolence and contempt, he likes the better. Besides, he will never once confess that he is in the wrong, else anything might be forgiven; no, no, the thing is impossible that he can ever be wrong! The poor author is not only always in the wrong, but, "Oh, he is the most insufferable beast!"

What has been the consequence? He has driven all his original correspondents from him that first gave Maga her zest, save one, who, though still his friend, can but seldom write for him, being now otherwise occupied, and another, who is indeed worth his weight in gold to him; but who, though invaluable, and I am sure much attached, yet has been a thousand times at the point of bolting off like a flash of lightning. I know it well, and Ebony, for his own sake, had better take care of this last remaining stem of a goodly bush, for he may depend on it that he has only an eel by the tail.

For my part, after twenty years of feelings hardly suppressed, he has driven me beyond the bounds of human patience. That Magazine of his, which owes its rise principally to myself, has often put words and sentiments into my mouth of which I have been greatly ashamed, and which have given much pain to my family and relations, and many of those after a solemn written promise that such freedoms should never be repeated. I have been often urged to restrain and humble him by legal measures as an incorrigible offender deserves. I know I have it in my power, and if he dares me to the task, I want but a hair to make a tether of.

I omitted to mention that I wrote and published a Masque or Drama, comprehending many songs, that summer the king was in Scotland. It was a theme that suited me to a tittle, as I there suffered fancy to revel free. I got no money for it; but I got what I held in higher estimation, his Majesty's thanks, for that and my other loyal and national songs. The note is written by Sir Robert Peel, in his Majesty's name, and I have preserved it as a relic.

REMINISCENCES OF SOME OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

One fine day in the summer of 1801, as I was busily engaged working in the field at Ettrick House, Wat Shiel came over to me and said, that "I boud gang away down to the Ramseycleugh as fast as my feet could carry me, for there war some gentlemen there wha wantit to speak to me."

"Wha can be at the Ramseycleugh that want me, Wat?"

"I coudna say, for it wasna me that they spak to i' the by-ganging. But I'm thinking it's the Shirra an' some o' his gang."

I was rejoiced to hear this, for I had seen the first volumes of the "Minstrelsy of the Border," and had copied a number of old ballads from my mother's recital, and sent them to the editor preparatory for a third volume. I accordingly went towards home to put on my Sunday clothes, but before reaching it I met with THE SHIRRA and Mr. William Laidlaw coming to visit me. They alighted and remained in our cottage for a space better than an hour, and my mother chanted the ballad of Old Maitlan' to them, with which Mr. Scott was highly delighted. I had sent him a copy (not a very perfect one, as I found afterwards, from the singing of another Laidlaw), but I thought Mr. Scott had some dread of a part being forged; that had been the cause of his journey into the wilds of Ettrick. When he heard my mother sing it he was quite satisfied, and I remember he asked her if she thought it had ever been printed; and her answer was, "Oo, na, na, sir, it was never printed i' the world, for my brothers an' me learned it frae auld Andrew Moor, an' he learned it, an' mony mae, frae auld Baby Mettlin [Maitland], that was house-keeper to the first laird o' Tushilaw."

"Then that must be a very auld story, indeed, Margaret," said he.

"Ay, it is that! It is an auld story! But mair nor that, except George Warton and James Steward, there was never ane o' my sangs prentit till ye prentit them yoursell. an' ye hae spoilt them a'thegither. They war made for singing, an' no for reading; and they 're nouther right spelled nor right setten down."

"Heh—heh—heh! Take ye that, Mr. Scott," said Laidlaw.

Mr. Scott answered by a hearty laugh, and the recital of a verse, but I have forgot what it was, and my mother gave him a rap on the knee with her open hand, and said, "It is true enough, for a' that."

We were all to dine at Ramseycleugh with the Messrs. Brydon; but Mr. Scott and Mr. Laidlaw went away to look at something before dinner, and I was to follow. On going into the stable-yard at Ramseycleugh, I met with Mr. Scott's liveryman, a far greater original than his master, at whom I asked if the Shirra was come?

"O, ay, lad, the Shirra's come," said he. "Are ye the chiel that maks the auld ballads and sings them?"

"I said I fancied I was he that he meant, though I had never made ony very *auld* ballads."

"Ay, then, lad, gae your ways in an' speir for the Shirra. They 'll let ye see where he is. He 'll be very glad to see you."

During the sociality of the evening, the discourse ran very much on the different breeds of sheep, that curse of the community of Ettrick Forest. The original black-faced forest breed being always called *the short sheep*, and the Cheviot breed *the long sheep*, the disputes at that period ran very high about the practicable profits of each. Mr. Scott, who had come into that remote district to preserve what fragments remained of its legendary lore, was rather bored with

the everlasting question of the long and the short sheep. So at length, putting on his most serious calculating face, he turned to Mr. Walter Brydon and said, "I am rather at a loss regarding the merits of this *very* important question. How long must a sheep actually measure to come under the denomination of *a long sheep!*"

Mr. Brydon, who, in the simplicity of his heart, neither perceived the quiz nor the reproof, fell to answer with great sincerity,—"It's the woo, sir—it's the woo that makes the difference. The lang sheep hae the short woo, and the short sheep hae the lang thing; and these are just kind o' names we gie them like." Mr. Scott could not preserve his grave face of strict calculation; it went gradually awry, and a hearty guffaw followed. When I saw the very same words repeated near the beginning of the "Black Dwarf," how could I be mistaken of the author? It is true, Johnnie Ballantyne persuaded me into a nominal belief of the contrary for several years following, but I could never get the better of that and several similar coincidences.

The next day we went off, five in number, to visit the wilds of Rankleburn, to see if on the farms of Buccleugh there were any relics of the Castles of Buccleugh or Mount-Comyn, the ancient and original possession of the Scotts. We found no remains of either tower or fortalice, save an old chapel and church-yard, and a mill and mill-dam, where corn never grew, but where, as old Satchells very appropriately says,—

> Had heather-bells been corn of the best,
> The Buccleugh mill would have had a noble grist.

It must have been used for grinding the chief's black mails, which, it is known, were all paid to him in kind. Many of these still continue to be paid in the same way; and if report say true, he would be the better of a mill and kiln on some part of his land at this day, as well as a sterling conscientious miller to receive and render.

Besides having been mentioned by Satchells, there was a remaining tradition in the country that there was a font stone of blue marble, out of which the ancient heirs of Buccleugh were baptized, covered up among the ruins of the old church. Mr. Scott was curious to see if we could discover it; but on going among the ruins, we found the rubbish at the spot, where the altar was known to have been, dug out to the foundation—we knew not by whom; but no font had been found. As there appeared to have been a kind of recess in the eastern gable, we fell a turning over some loose stones, to see if the font was not concealed there, when we came to one half of a small pot, encrusted thick with rust. Mr. Scott's eye brightened, and he swore it was an ancient consecrated helmet. Laidlaw, however, scratching it minutely out, found it covered with a layer of pitch inside, and then said, "Ay, the truth is, sir, it is neither mair nor less than a piece of a tar pat that some o' the farmers hae been buisting their sheep out o', i' the auld kirk langsyne." Sir Walter's shaggy eyebrows dipped deep over his eyes, and suppressing a smile, he turned and strode away as fast as he could, saying, that "we had just ridden all the way to see that there was nothing to *be* seen."

I remember his riding upon a terribly high-spirited horse, which had the perilous fancy of leaping every drain, rivulet, and ditch that came in our way; the consequence was, that he was everlastingly bogging himself, while sometimes the rider kept his seat despite of the animal's plunging, and at other times he was obliged to extricate himself the best way he could. In coming through a place called the Milsey Bog, I said to him, "Mr. Scott, that's the maddest deil of a beast I ever saw. Can ye no gar him tak a wee mair time? He's just out o' ae lair intil another wi' ye."

"Ay," said he, "he and I have been very often, these two days past, like the Pechs; we could stand straight up and tie our shoe-lachets." I did not understand the joke, nor do I yet, but I think these were his words.

We visited the old castles of Thirlestane and Tushilaw, and dined and spent the afternoon and the night with Mr. Brydon of Crosslee. Sir Walter was all the while in the highest good humour, and seemed to enjoy the range of mountain solitude, which we traversed, exceedingly. Indeed, I never saw him otherwise in the fields. On the rugged mountains, or even toiling in Tweed to the waist, I have seen his glee not only surpass his own, but that of all other men. His memory, or, perhaps I should say, his recollection, surpasses that of all men whom I ever knew. I saw a pleasant instance of it recorded lately, regarding Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope;" but I think I can relate a more extraordinary one.

He and Skene of Rubislaw and I were out one night, about midnight, leistering kippers in Tweed, and on going to kindle a light at the Elibank March, we found, to our inexpressible grief, that our coal had gone out. To think of giving up our sport was out of the question; so we had no other shift, save to send Rob Fletcher home, all the way through the darkness, the distance of two miles, for another fiery peat.

While Fletcher was absent, we three sat down on a piece of beautiful greensward, on the brink of the river, and Scott desired me to sing him my ballad of "Gilmanscleugh." Now, be it remembered that this ballad had never been either printed or penned. I had merely composed it by rote, and on finishing it, three years before, I had sung it once over to Sir Walter. I began it at his request; but at the eighth or ninth verse I stuck in it, and could not get on with another line, on which he began it a second time, and recited it every word from beginning to end. It being a very long ballad, consisting of eighty-eight stanzas, I testified my astonishment. He said that he had lately been out on a pleasure party on the Forth, and that, to amuse the company, he had recited both that ballad and one of Southey's, "The Abbot of Aberbrothock;" both of which ballads he had only heard once from their respective authors, and he believed he had recited them both without misplacing a word.

Rob Fletcher came at last, and Mr. Laidlaw of Peel with him, and into the foaming river we plunged, in our frail bark, with a fine blazing light. In a few minutes we came into Gliddy's Weal, the deepest pool

in Tweed, when we perceived that our boat gave evident symptoms of sinking. When Scott saw the terror that Peel was in, he laughed till the tears blinded his eyes. Always, the more mischief, the better sport for him! "For God's sake, push her to the side!" roared Peel. "Oh, she goes fine!" said Scott; "an' gin the boat were bottomless, and seven miles to row;" and, by the time he had well got out the words, down she went to the bottom, plunging us all into Tweed over head and ears. It was no sport to me at all; but that was a glorious night for Sir Walter, and the next day was no worse.

I remember leaving Altrive Lake once with him, accompanied by my dear friend William Laidlaw and Sir Adam Ferguson, to visit the tremendous solitudes of the Gray Mare's Tail and Loch Skene. I conducted them through that wild region by a path, which, if not rode by Clavers, was, I dare say, never rode by another human being. Sir Adam rode inadvertently into a gulf, and got a sad fright, but Sir Walter, in the very worst paths, never dismounted, save at Loch Skene, to take some dinner. We went to Moffat that night, where we met with some of his family, and such a day and night of glee I never witnessed. Our very perils were matter to him of infinite merriment; and then there was a short-tempered boot-boy at the inn, who wanted to pick a quarrel with him, at which he laughed till the water ran over his cheeks.

I was disappointed in never seeing some incident in his subsequent works laid in a scene resembling the rugged solitude around Loch Skene, for I never saw him survey any with so much attention. A single serious look at a scene generally filled his mind with it, and he seldom took another; but here he took the names of all the hills, their altitudes, and relative situations with regard to one another, and made me repeat them several times. It may occur in some of his works which I have not seen, and I think it will, for he has rarely ever been known to interest himself, either in a scene or a character, which did not appear afterwards in all its most striking peculiarities.

There are not above five people in the world, who, I think, know Sir Walter better, or understand his character better than I do; and if I outlive him, which is likely, as I am five months and ten days younger, I shall draw a mental portrait of him, the likeness of which to the original shall not be disputed. In the meantime, this is only a reminiscence, in my own line, of an illustrious friend among the mountains.

The enthusiasm with which he recited, and spoke of our ancient ballads, during that first tour of his through the forest, inspired me with a determination immediately to begin and imitate them, which I did, and soon grew tolerably good at it. I dedicated "The Mountain Bard" to him:—

> Bless'd be his generous heart for aye;
> He told me where the relic lay,
> Pointed my way with ready will,
> Afar on Ettrick's wildest hill;
> Watch'd my first notes with curious eye,
> And wonder'd at my minstrelsy:
> He little ween'd a parent's tongue
> Such strains had o'er my cradle sung.

WORDSWORTH.

I have forgotten what year it was, but it was in the summer that the "Excursion" was first published, when Mr. James Wilson came to me, one day, in Edinburgh, and asked me to come to his mother's house in Queen Street to dinner, and meet Mr. Wordsworth and his lady. I said I should be glad to meet any friend of his kind and venerated mother's at any time, and should certainly come. But not having the least conception that the great poet of the Lakes was in Edinburgh, and Wilson having called him *Mr.* Wordsworth, I took it for the celebrated horse-dealer of the same name, and entertained some shrewd misgivings, how he should chance to be a guest in a house where only the first people in Edinburgh were wont to be invited.

"You will like him very much," said Wilson; "for although he proses a little, he is exceedingly intelligent."

"I dare say he is," returned I; "at all events, he is allowed to be a good judge of horse-flesh!" The entomologist liked the joke well, and carried it on for some time; and I found, in my tour southward with the celebrated poet, that several gentlemen fell into the same error, expressing themselves as at a loss why I should be travelling the country with a *horse-couper*. He was clothed in a gray russet jacket and pantaloons, be it remembered, and wore a broad-brimmed beaver hat, so that to strangers he doubtless had a very original appearance.

When I finally learned from Wilson that it was the poet of the Lakes whom I was to meet, I was overjoyed, for I admired many of his pieces exceedingly, though I had not then seen his ponderous "Excursion." I listened to him that night as to a superior being, far exalted above the common walks of life. His sentiments seemed just, and his language, though perhaps a little pompous, was pure, sentient, and expressive. We called on several noblemen and gentlemen in company; and all the while he was in Scotland I loved him better and better. Old Dr. Robert Anderson travelled along with us as far as the sources of the Yarrow, and it was delightful to see the deference which Wordsworth paid to that venerable man. We went into my father's cot, and partook of some homely refreshment, visited St. Mary's Lake, which that day was calm, and pure as any mirror; and Mrs. Wordsworth in particular testified great delight with the whole scene. In tracing the windings of the pastoral Yarrow, from its source to its confluence with the sister stream, the poet was in great good humour, delightful and most eloquent. Indeed it was impossible to see Yarrow to greater advantage; and yet it failed of the anticipated inspiration; for "Yarrow Visited" is not so sweet or ingenious a poem as "Yarrow Unvisited;" so much is hope superior to enjoyment.

From Selkirk we were obliged to take different routes, as Wordsworth had business in Teviotdale, and I in Eskdale; and at last I landed at Ryedale Mount, his delightful dwelling, a day and a night before him

and his lady. I found his sister there, however, a pure ingenuous child of nature; kind, benevolent, and greatly attached to her brother. Her conversation was a true mental treat; and we spent the time with the children delightfully till the poet's arrival.

I dined with him, and called on him several times afterwards, and certainly never met with anything but the most genuine kindness; therefore people have wondered why I should have indulged in caricaturing his style in the "Poetic Mirror." I have often regretted that myself; but it was merely a piece of ill-nature at an affront which I conceived had been put on me. It was the triumphal arch scene. This anecdote has been told and told again, but never truly; and was likewise brought forward in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ" as a joke, but it was no joke; and the plain, simple truth of the matter was thus:—

It chanced one night, when I was there, that there was a resplendent arch across the zenith, from the one horizon to the other, of something like the aurora borealis, but much brighter. It was a scene that is well remembered, for it struck the country with admiration, as such a phenomenon had never before been witnessed in such perfection; and, as far as I could learn, it had been more brilliant over the mountains and pure waters of Westmoreland than anywhere else. Well, when word came into the room of the splendid meteor, we all went out to view it; and, on the beautiful platform at Mount Ryedale, we were all walking, in twos and threes, arm-in-arm, talking of the phenomenon, and admiring it. Now, be it remembered, that Wordsworth, Professor Wilson, Lloyd, De Quincey, and myself, were present, besides several other literary gentlemen, whose names I am not certain that I remember aright. Miss Wordsworth's arm was in mine, and she was expressing some fears that the splendid stranger might prove ominous, when I, by ill luck, blundered out the following remark, thinking that I was saying a good thing:—"Hout, me'm! it is neither mair nor less than joost a treeumphal airch, raised in honour of the meeting of the poets."

"That's not amiss—eh? eh?—that's very good," said the Professor, laughing. But Wordsworth, who had De Quincey's arm, gave a grunt, and turned on his heel, and leading the little opium-chewer aside, he addressed him in these disdainful and venomous words:—"Poets? poets? What does the fellow mean? Where are they?"

Who could forgive this? For my part I never can, and never will! I admire Wordsworth; as who does not, whatever they may pretend? but for that short sentence I have a lingering ill-will at him which I cannot get rid of. It is surely presumption in any man to circumscribe all human excellence within the narrow sphere of his own capacity. The "*Where are they!*" was too bad! I have always some hopes that De Quincey was *leeing*, for I did not myself hear Wordsworth utter the words.

I have only a single remark to make on the poetry of Wordsworth, and I do it because I never saw the remark made before. It relates to the richness of his works for quotations. For these they are a mine that is altogether inexhaustible. There is nothing in nature that you may not get a quotation out of Wordsworth to suit, and a quotation too that breathes the very soul of poetry. There are only three books in the world that are worth the opening in search of mottos and quotations, and all of them are alike rich. These are, the Old Testament, Shakspeare, and the poetical works of Wordsworth, and, strange to say, the "Excursion" abounds most in them.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

One day, about the beginning of autumn, some three-and-twenty years ago, as I was herding my master's ewes on the great hill of Queensberry, in Nithsdale, I perceived two men coming towards me, who appeared to be strangers. I saw, by their way of walking, they were not shepherds, and could not conceive what the men were seeking there, where there was neither path nor aim towards any human habitation. However, I stood staring about me till they came up, always ordering my old dog Hector to silence in an authoritative style, he being the only servant I had to attend to my orders. The men approached me rather in a breathless state, from climbing the hill. The one was a tall thin man, of a fairish complexion, and pleasant intelligent features, seemingly approaching to forty; and the other a dark ungainly youth of about eighteen, with a boardly frame for his age, and strongly marked manly features—the very model of Burns, and exactly such a man. Had they been of the same age, it would not have been easy to distinguish the one from the other.

The eldest came up and addressed me frankly, asking me if I was Mr. Harkness's shepherd, and if my name was James Hogg? to both of which queries I answered cautiously in the affirmative, for I was afraid they were come to look after me with an accusation regarding some of the lasses. The younger stood at a respectful distance, as if I had been the Duke of Queensberry, instead of a ragged servant lad herding sheep. The other seized my hand and said, "Well, then, sir, I am glad to see you. There is not a man in Scotland whose hand I am prouder to hold."

I could not say a single word in answer to this address; but when he called me SIR, I looked down at my bare feet and ragged coat, to remind the man whom he was addressing. But he continued: "My name is James Cunningham, a name unknown to you, though yours is not entirely so to me; and this is my younger brother Allan, the greatest admirer that you have on earth, and himself a young aspiring poet of some promise. You will be so kind as excuse this intrusion of ours on your solitude, for, in truth, I could get no peace either night or day with Allan till I consented to come and see you."

I then stepped down the hill to where Allan Cunningham still stood, with his weather-beaten cheek toward me, and, seizing his hard brawny hand, I gave it a hearty shake, saying something as kind as I was able, and, at the same time, I am sure as stupid as it possibly could be. From that moment we were friends, for Allan has none of the proverbial Scottish

caution about him; he is all heart together, without reserve either of expression or manner: you at once see the unaffected benevolence, warmth of feeling, and firm independence of a man conscious of his own rectitude and mental energies. Young as he was, I had heard of his name, although slightly, and, I think, seen one or two of his juvenile pieces. Of an elder brother of his, Thomas Mouncey, I had, previous to that, conceived a very high idea; and I always marvel how he could possibly put his poetical vein under lock and key, as he did all at once, for he certainly then bade fair to be the first of Scottish bards.

I had a small bothy upon the hill, in which I took my breakfast and dinner on wet days, and rested myself. It was so small, that we had to walk in on all-fours; and when we were in we could not get up our heads any way, but in a sitting posture. It was exactly my own length, and, on the one side, I had a bed of rushes, which served likewise as a seat; on this we all three sat down, and there we spent the whole afternoon, and, I am sure, a happier group of three never met on the hill of Queensberry. Allan brightened up prodigiously after he got into the dark bothy, repeating all his early pieces of poetry, and part of his brother's, to me. The two brothers partook heartily, and without reserve, of my scrip and bottle of sweet milk; and the elder Mr. Cunningham had a strong bottle with him—I have forgot whether it was brandy or rum, but I remember it was excessively good, and helped to keep up our spirits to a late hour. Thus began at that bothy, in the wilderness, a friendship and a mutual attachment between two aspiring Scottish peasants, over which the shadow of a cloud has never yet passed.

From that day forward I failed not to improve my acquaintance with the Cunninghams. I visited them several times at Dalswinton, and never missed an opportunity of meeting with Allan when it was in my power to do so. I was astonished at the luxuriousness of his fancy. It was boundless; but it was the luxury of a rich garden overrun with rampant weeds. He was likewise then a great mannerist in expression, and no man could mistake his verses for those of any other man. I remember seeing some imitations of Ossian by him, which I thought exceedingly good; and it struck me that that style of composition was peculiarly fitted for his vast and fervent imagination.

When Cromek's "Nithsdale and Galloway Relics" came to my hand, I at once discerned the strains of my friend, and I cannot describe with what sensations of delight I first heard Mr. Morrison read the "Mermaid of Galloway," while at every verse I kept naming the author. It had long been my fixed opinion, that if a person could once succeed in the genuine ballad style, his muse was adequate for any other; and after seeing Allan's strains in that work, I concluded that no man could calculate what he was capable of.

I continued my asseverations to all my intimate friends, *that Allan Cunningham was the author of all that was beautiful in the work.* Gray, who had an attachment to Cromek, denied it positively on his friend's authority. Grieve joined him. Morrison, I saw, had strong lurking suspicions; but then he stickled for the ancient genius of Galloway. When I went to Sir Walter Scott (then Mr. Scott), I found him decidedly of the same opinion as myself; and he said he wished to God we had that valuable and original young man fairly out of Cromek's hands again.

I next wrote a review of the work, in which I laid the saddle on the right horse, and sent it to Mr. Jeffrey; but, after retaining it for some time, he returned it with a note, saying, that he had read over the article, and was convinced of the fraud which had been attempted to be played off on the public, but he did not think it worthy of exposure. I have the article and card by me to this day.

Mr. Cunningham's style of poetry is greatly changed of late for the better. I have never seen any style improved so much. It is free of all that crudeness and mannerism that once marked it so decidedly. He is now uniformly lively, serious, descriptive, or pathetic, as he changes his subject; but formerly he jumbled all these together, as in a boiling caldron, and when once he began, it was impossible to calculate where or when he was going to end. If these reminiscences should meet his friendly eye, he will pardon them, on the score that they are the effusions of a heart that loves to dwell on some scenes of former days.

GALT.

I first met with this most original and most careless writer at Greenock, in the summer of 1804, as I and two friends were setting out on a tour through the Hebrides; so that Galt and I have been acquainted these twenty-eight years.

That was a memorable evening for me, for it was the first time I ever knew that my name had been known beyond the precincts of my native wilds, and was not a little surprised at finding it so well known in a place called Greenock, at the distance of one hundred miles. I had by some chance heard the name of the town, and had formed an idea of its being a mouldy-looking village on an ugly coast. How agreeably was I deceived, not only in the appearance of the town, but the metal which it contained!

My two friends and I, purposing to remain there only a night, had no sooner arrived, than word had flown, it seems, through the town that a strange poetical chap had arrived there, and a deputation was sent to us, inviting us to a supper at the Tontine Hotel. Of course we accepted; and, on going there, found no fewer than thirty gentlemen assembled to welcome us, and among the rest was Mr. Galt, then a tall, thin young man, with something a little dandyish in his appearance. He was dressed in a frock-coat and new top-boots; and it being then the fashion to wear the shirt collars as high as the eyes, Galt wore his the whole of that night with the one side considerably above his ear, and the other flapped over the collar of his frock-coat down to his shoulder. He had another peculiarity, which appeared to me a singular instance of perversity. He walked with his spectacles on and conversed with them on; but when he read he took them off. In short, from his first appearance,

one would scarcely have guessed him to be a man of genius.

The first thing that drew my attention to him was an argument about the moral tendency of some of Shakspeare's plays, in which, though he had two opponents, and one of them both obstinate and loquacious, he managed his part with such good nature and such strong emphatic reasoning, that my heart whispered me again and again, "This is no common youth." Then his stories of old-fashioned and odd people were so infinitely amusing, that his conversation proved one of the principal charms of that enchanting night. The conversation of that literary community of friends at Greenock, as well as their songs and stories, was much above what I had ever been accustomed to hear. I formed one other intimate and highly valued acquaintance that night, which continued with increasing affection till his lamented death: I allude to James Park, Esq., junior, of that place, Mr. Galt's firm and undeviating friend. I like Galt's writings exceedingly, and have always regretted that he has depicted so much that is selfish and cunning in the Scottish character, and so little that is truly amiable, when he could have done it so well.

SOUTHEY.

My first interview with Mr. Southey was at the Queen's Head Inn, in Keswick, where I had arrived, wearied, one evening, on my way to Westmoreland; and not liking to intrude on his family circle that evening, I sent a note up to Greta Hall, requesting him to come down and see me. He came on the instant, and stayed with me about an hour and a half. But I was a grieved as well as an astonished man, when I found that he refused all participation in my beverage of rum punch. For a poet to refuse his glass was to me a phenomenon; and I confess I doubted in my own mind, and doubt to this day, if perfect sobriety and transcendant poetical genius can exist together. In Scotland I am sure they cannot. With regard to the English, I shall leave them to settle that among themselves, as they have little that is worth drinking.

Before we had been ten minutes together my heart was knit to Southey, and every hour thereafter my esteem for him increased. I breakfasted with him next morning, and remained with him all that day and the next; and the weather being fine, we spent the time in rambling on the hills and sailing on the lake; and all the time he manifested a delightful flow of spirits, as well as a kind sincerity of manner, repeating convivial poems and ballads, and always between hands breaking jokes on his nephew, young Coleridge, in whom he seemed to take great delight. He gave me, with the utmost readiness, a poem and ballad of his own, for a work which I then projected. I objected to his going with Coleridge and me, for fear of encroaching on his literary labours; and, as I had previously resided a month at Keswick, I knew every scene almost in Cumberland; but he said he was an early riser, and never suffered any task to interfere with his social enjoyments and recreations; and along with us he went both days.

Southey certainly is as elegant a writer as any in the kingdom. But those who would love Southey as well as admire him, must see him, as I did, in the bosom, not only of one lovely family, but of three all attached to him as a father, and all elegantly maintained and educated, it is generally said, by his indefatigable pen. The whole of Southey's conversation and economy, both at home and afield, left an impression of veneration on my mind, which no future contingency shall ever either extinguish or injure. Both his figure and countenance are imposing, and deep thought is strongly marked in his dark eye; but there is a defect in his eye-lids, for these he has no power of raising, so that when he looks up he turns up his face, being unable to raise his eyes; and when he looks towards the top of one of his romantic mountains, one would think he was looking at the zenith. This peculiarity is what will most strike every stranger in the appearance of the accomplished laureate. He does not at all see well at a distance, which made me several times disposed to get into a passion with him, because he did not admire the scenes which I was pointing out. We have only exchanged a few casual letters since that period, and I have never seen this great and good man again.

LOCKHART.

When it is considered what literary celebrity Lockhart has gained so early in life, and how warm and disinterested a friend he has been to me, it argues but little for my sagacity that I scarcely recollect anything of our first encounters. He was a mischievous Oxford puppy, for whom I was terrified, dancing after the young ladies, and drawing caricatures of every one who came in contact with him. But then I found him constantly in company with all the better rank of people with whom I associated, and consequently it was impossible for me not to meet with him. I dreaded his eye terribly; and it was not without reason, for he was very fond of playing tricks on me, but always in such a way that it was impossible to lose temper with him. I never parted company with him that my judgment was not entirely jumbled with regard to characters, books, and literary articles of every description. Even his household economy seemed clouded in mystery; and if I got any explanation, it was sure not to be the right thing. It may be guessed how astonished I was one day, on perceiving six black servants waiting at his table upon six white gentlemen! Such a train of blackamoors being beyond my comprehension, I asked for an explanation, but got none, save that he found them very useful and obliging poor fellows, and that they did not look for much wages, beyond a mouthful of meat.

A young lady hearing me afterwards making a fuss about such a phenomenon, and saying that the blackamoors would break my young friend, she assured me that Mr. Lockhart had only *one* black servant, but that when the master gave a dinner to his friends, the servant, knowing there would be enough, and to spare,

for all, invited his friends also. Lockhart always kept a good table, and a capital stock of liquor, especially Jamaica rum, and by degrees I grew not so frightened to visit him.

After Wilson and he, and Sym and I had resolved on supporting Blackwood, it occasioned us to be oftener together; but Lockhart contrived to keep my mind in the utmost perplexity for years on all things that related to that magazine. Being often curious to know when the tremendous articles appeared, who were the authors, and being sure I could draw nothing out of either Wilson or Sym, I always repaired to Lockhart to ask him, awaiting his reply with fixed eyes and a beating heart. Then, with his cigar in his mouth, his one leg flung carelessly over the other, and without the symptoms of a smile on his face, or one twinkle of mischief in his dark gray eye, he would father the articles on his brother, Captain Lockhart, or Peter Robertson, or Sheriff Cay, or James Wilson, or that queer fat body, Dr. Scott; and sometimes on James and John Ballantyne, and Sam Anderson, and poor Baxter. I remember once, at a festival of the Dilletanti Society, that Lockhart was sitting next me, and charming my ear with some story of authorship—I have forgot what it was, but think it was about somebody reviewing his own book; on which I said the incident was such a capital one, that I would give anything to ascertain if it were true.

"What?" said Bridges; "did anybody ever hear the like of that? I hope you are not suspecting your young friend of telling you a falsehood?"

"Haud your tongue, Davie, for ye ken naething about it," said I. "Could ye believe it, man, that callant never tauld me the truth a' his days but ainee, an' that was merely by chance, an' without the least intention on his part?" These blunt accusations diverted Lockhart greatly, and only encouraged him to further tricks.

I soon found out that the coterie of my literary associates had made it up to act on O'Dogherty's principle, never to deny a thing that they had *not* written, and never to acknowledge one that they *had*. On which I determined that, in future, I would sign my name or designation to everything I published, that I might be answerable to the world only for my own offences. But as soon as the rascals perceived this, they signed my name as fast as I did. They then contrived the incomparable "Noctes Ambrosianæ," for the sole purpose of putting all the sentiments into the Shepherd's mouth which they durst not avowedly say themselves, and those too often applying to my best friends.

The thing that most endeared Lockhart to me at that early period was some humorous poetry which he published anonymously in Blackwood's Magazine, and which I still regard as the best of the same description in the kingdom.

Of all the practical jokes that ever Lockhart played off on the public in his thoughtless days, the most successful and ludicrous was that about Dr. Scott. He was a strange-looking, bald-headed, bluff little man, that practised as a dentist both in Glasgow and Edinburgh, keeping a good house and hospitable table in both, and considered skilful; but for utter ignorance of everything literary, he was not to be matched among a dozen street porters with ropes round their necks. This droll old tippling sinner was a joker in his way, and to Lockhart and his friends a subject of constant mystifications and quizzes, which he partly saw through; but his uncommon vanity made him like the notice, and when at last the wags began to publish songs and ballads in his name, O then he could not resist going into the delusion! and though he had a horrid bad voice, and hardly any ear, he would roar and sing the songs in every company as his own.

Ignorant and uneducated as he was, Lockhart sucked his brains so cleverly, and crammed "The Odontist's" songs with so many of the creature's own peculiar phrases, and the names and histories of his obscure associates, that, though I believe the man could scarce spell a note of three lines, even his intimate acquaintances were obliged to swallow the hoax, and by degrees "The Odontist" passed for a first-rate convivial bard, that had continued to eat and drink and draw teeth for fifty years, and more, without ever letting the smallest corner of the napkin appear to be lifted, under which his wonderful talents had lain concealed. I suspect Captain Tom Hamilton, the original O'Dogherty, had also some hand in that ploy; at least he seemed to enjoy it as if he had, for though he pretended to be a high and starched Whig, he was always engaged with these madcap Tories, and the foremost in many of their wicked contrivances.

Well, at last this joke took so well, and went so far, that shortly after the appearance of "The Lament for Captain Paton," one of Lockhart's best things, by the bye, but which was published in the doctor's name, he happened to take a trip to Liverpool in a steamboat, and had no sooner arrived there than he was recognized and hailed as Ebony's glorious Odontist! The literary gentry got up a public dinner for him in honour of his great and versatile genius, and the body very coolly accepted the compliment, replying to the toasts and speeches and all the rest of it. And what is more, none of them ever found him out; which to me, who knew him so well, was quite wonderful. What would I have given to have been at that meeting! I am sure Dean Swift himself never played off a more successful hit than this of "The Odontist."

He is long since dead; but he left a name behind him which has continued to this day, when I have let the secret out. Had he lived till now, I am persuaded his works would have swelled out to volumes, and would have been published in his name, with his portrait at the beginning. I never heard whether he left Lockhart any legacy or not; but he certainly ought to have done so, and both to him and Captain Hamilton. Even the acute Johnie Ballantyne was entrapped, and requested me several times to bring him acquainted with that Dr. Scott, who was one of the most original and extraordinary fellows he had ever met with in print, and he wished much to have the honour of being his publisher. In answer to this request I could only laugh in the bibliopole's face, having been for that once in the true secret. I could tell several stories

fully as good as this; but as John is now a reformed character, to all appearance, I shall spare him for the present. Wilson's and his merry doings of those days would make a singular book, and perhaps I may attempt to detail them before I die.

SYM.

I first met with that noble and genuine old Tory, the renowned Timothy Tickler, in his own hospitable mansion of South Side, *alias* George's Square, in the south corner of Edinburgh, and to which I was introduced by one of his sister's sons, I think Mr. Robert Wilson, the professor's second brother.

At the very first appearance of my weekly paper "The Spy," Mr. Sym interested himself for it. Not only did his name appear first on the list of subscribers, but he recommended it strongly to all his friends and acquaintances, as a paper worthy of being patronised. Some of the fine madams pointed out to him a few inadvertences, or more properly, absurdities, which had occurred in the papers; but he replied, "O, I don't deny that; but I like them the better for these, as they show me at once the character of the writer. I believe him to be a very great blockhead; still I maintain, that there is some smeddum in him."

As the paper went on, he sent me some written advices anonymously, which were excellent, and which I tried to conform to as much as I could. He also sent me some very clever papers for the work, which appeared in it, but all the while kept himself closely concealed from me. It is natural to suppose that I had the most kindly feeling towards this friendly stranger; but it was not till I became acquainted with the Wilsons long afterwards that I knew who he was. When Mr. Robert informed me that he was his uncle, I was all impatience to see him.

A little while before the conclusion of "The Spy," Mr. Aikman, the publisher, told me one day that he suspected the friend who had interested himself so much in my success was a Mr. Sym; but I had never heard more than merely his name, and imagined him to be some very little man about Leith. Judge of my astonishment, when I was admitted by a triple-bolted door into a grand house in George's Square, and introduced to its lord, an uncommonly fine-looking elderly gentlemen, about seven feet high, and as straight as an arrow! His hair was whitish, his complexion had the freshness and ruddiness of youth, his looks and address full of kindness and benevolence; but whenever he stood straight up (for he had always to stoop about half way when speaking to a common-sized man like me), then you could not help perceiving a little of the haughty air of the determined and independent old aristocrat.

From that time forward, during my stay in Edinburgh, Mr. Sym's hospitable mansion was the great evening resort of his three nephews and me; sometimes there were a few friends besides, of whom Lockhart and Mr. Samuel Anderson were mostly two, but we four for certain; and there are no jovial evenings of my by-past life which I reflect on with greater delight than those. Tickler is completely an original, as any man may see who has attended to his remarks; for there is no sophistry there, they are every one his own. Nay, I don't believe that North has, would, or durst put a single sentence into his mouth that had not proceeded out of it. His reading, both ancient and modern, is boundless; his taste and perception acute beyond those of other men; his satire keen and biting, but at the same time his good-humour is altogether inexhaustible, save when ignited by coming in collision with Whig or Radical principles. Still there being no danger of that with me, he and I never differed in one single sentiment in our lives, excepting on the comparative merits of some Strathspey reels.

But the pleasantest part of our fellowship is yet to describe. At a certain period of the night our entertainer knew by the longing looks which I cast to a beloved corner of the dining-room what was wanting. Then he would take out a small gold key that hung by a chain of the same precious metal to a particular button-hole, and stalk away as tall as the life, open two splendid fiddle cases, and produce their contents, first the one and then the other, but always keeping the best to himself. I'll never forget with what elated dignity he stood straight up in the middle of that floor and rosined his bow: there was a twist of the lip, and an upward beam of the eye, that were truly sublime. Then down we sat side by side, and began—at first gently, and with easy motion, like skilful grooms, keeping ourselves up for the final heat, which was slowly but surely approaching. At the end of every tune we took a glass, and still our enthusiastic admiration of the Scottish tunes increased, our energies of execution redoubled, till ultimately it became not only a complete and well-contested race, but a trial of strength to determine which should drown the other. The only feelings short of ecstasy that came across us in these enraptured moments, were caused by hearing the laugh and joke going on with our friends as if no such thrilling strains had been flowing. But if Sym's eye chanced at all to fall on them, it instantly retreated upwards again in mild indignation. To his honour be it mentioned, he has left me a legacy of that inestimable violin, provided that I outlive him. But not for a thousand such would I part with my old friend.

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